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ABSTRACT

The ten articles in this special journal issue focus on social movements. Specifically, the articles discuss the following topics: (1) the study of social movements; (2) the meaning of "social movement"; (3) a skeptical view of movement studies; (4) coming to terms with movement studies; (5) defining social movements by their rhetorical forms; (6) history and theory in the study of the rhetoric of social movements; (7) the rhetorical requirements, problems, and strategies of American bishops of the Roman Catholic church; (8) the historical criticism of social movements; (9) a functional approach to the rhetoric of social movements; and (10) terms, definitions, and theoretical distinctiveness in social movements. (FL)

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EDITOR'S NOTE

This special issue of the *Central States Speech Journal* has been largely a result of the efforts of Herbert W. Simons of Temple University and Stephen E. Lucas of the University of Wisconsin at Madison who served as guest editor and guest associate editor respectively. The essays herein were originally presented in a 1979 Speech Communication Association sponsored seminar on social movements. For this issue, they have been substantially rewritten and more fully developed. The editor also wishes to thank Professor Bruce E. Gronbeck, University of Iowa, for his role in reading several of the manuscripts in various stages of development.

Because of the nature of the project and time limitations involved, some of the essays in which the authors refer to others in the issue refer to the original typescripts. This complicates the process of locating exact pages for quotations in a few instances, and readers should be alert to this fact. For the convention employed, the editor takes responsibility.

During the past quarter, I have been aided by Professor James R. Andrews, Indiana University, Professor Richard L. Johannesen, Northern Illinois University, and Professor Beverly Whitaker Long, University of North Carolina, each of whom served in the capacity of referee for other manuscripts. To them I extend a word of personal gratitude.

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ON STUDYING MOVEMENTS

Leland M. Griffin

IT is now some thirty years since I completed my doctoral dissertation, "The Antimasonic Persuasion: A Study of Public Address in the American Antimasonic Movement, 1826-1838." This was one of the earliest studies of a movement, though an interest in studies that would move away from the concern with the individual orator was certainly in the air during the early post-war years. Such an interest had been expressed by my adviser, Herbert Wichelns, in a paper delivered at the 1946 convention of the Speech Association of America; and the following year, S. Judson Crandall suggested a method for the study of movements in "The Beginnings of a Methodology for Social Control Studies in Public Address."[1] Later, as I was casting about for a topic for a dissertation, Wichelns suggested that I see what I could do with a movement. I found Crandall's approach too sociological for my tastes, but the idea of a movement study was attractive. My method of selecting one was running my finger down the index of Morison and Commager's *Growth of the American Republic* until I came to the first movement mentioned, the Antimasonic. A check of the Cornell library revealed riches unanticipated: the Benny Loewy Collection of materials on secret societies in general, and Freemasonry in particular. Since the Antimasonic movement had begun in western New York, the collection was particularly rich in pertinent materials. And so, without much sense as to how to proceed, I began at what seemed to be the beginning—with the event that precipitated the earliest rhetoric of the movement, the alleged murder, at Fort Niagara, by Freemasons unknown, of one William Morgan, a recusant Mason who was preparing a book that would reveal the "secrets" of the order.

The dissertation was completed in 1950, and several years later, I attempted a theoretical and methodological article, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements." In that essay, I suggested that the "rhetorical movement" within the historical movement should be the point of focus in movement studies; that two classes of rhetorical movement might be identified, *pro* and *anti* movements, each with its complement of aggressor and defendant rhetors; that such movements developed in three stages, through periods of inception, rhetorical crisis, and consummation; and that the discourse of movements should be evaluated in terms of a rhetorical theory indigenous to the times.[2] In a companion essay, I attempted to provide, in much briefer compass than the original dissertation, an illustration of both the theory and the method.[3]

Early in 1962, I was invited to read a paper at Wayne Minnick's program, "The Rhetoric of Contemporary Politics," at the SCA convention in Cleveland. I agreed to do a paper on the

Leland M. Griffin is Professor of Speech at Northwestern University.

1 *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 33 (1947), 36-39.

2 *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (1952), 184-88.

3 "The Rhetorical Structure of the Antimasonic Movement," *The Rhetorical Idiom*, ed. Donald C. Bryant (Ithaca, N.Y., 1958), pp. 145-59.

rhetoric of the Left, not at all sure, given the times, that such a rhetoric existed. But I had become increasingly interested in the writings of Kenneth Burke, and I was curious to see if dramatism, given its somewhat leftist origins, might not be particularly appropriate for the analysis of leftist rhetoric. The paper that I developed bore a somewhat polemical title—"New Left Rhetoric and the Last Sophistic"—but it was a title quite in the spirit of the other papers on this lively program: Barnett Baskerville's "The Cross and the Flag: Evangelists of the Far Right," Ernest Wrage's "The Little World of Barry Goldwater," and Harry Kerr's "Mass Market in the Middle."[4] During the course of developing the paper, I had become convinced that not only was there a rhetoric of the Left in America, but also that a "New Left" movement was in an incipient stage of formation.

In the months that followed, I completed a two-part manuscript which I sent to the Marie Hochmuth, then editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech*. The first, essentially descriptive, was a study of the movement to the summer of 1963; the second, essentially poetic, was an attempt to use the pentad to "forecast" the rhetorical course that the movement might take. Marie sensed that the second section was in need of revision; indeed she assured me that its four pages of text and twelve pages of footnotes would constitute a "murderous assault" on readers. But the first section she accepted, and with the addition of a "postscript" occasioned by Oswald's assassination of President Kennedy, the manuscript was published under the title, "The Rhetorical Structure of the 'New Left' Movement: Part One."[5] The name of the movement was in quotation marks, since it was one I had chosen arbitrarily; it was not until the fall of 1964, with the eruption of the "Free Speech" movement in Berkeley, that the same label, fortuitously, began to appear in the public press. The "Part One" of the title was Marie's idea—promissory, and a goad to spur my efforts to revise the second part of the manuscript. This I endeavored to do, and I spent the next two years in the effort. I decided to jettison what I had done, truly immerse myself in Burke's writings, and attempt to develop a theoretical and methodological essay that would amplify, in dramatistic terms, my earlier article on "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements." I hoped that the resulting "abstraction" of a movement's rhetoric might provide, incidentally, some checkpoints for gauging the progress of the ongoing New Left movement. Eventually, I completed the essay which I called "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements." Professor Rueckert had informed me that he was gathering material for a volume on Burke, and when I sent him the essay, he accepted it for his book, *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke: 1924-1966*. The book was published in 1969; and in the initial footnote to my contribution, I noted that it was intended as supplementary to "The Rhetorical Structure of the 'New Left' Movement: Part One."[6]

In the course of writing this dramatistic essay, I came to a realization of the importance of the counter-movement; indeed, though I had not recognized that phenomenon during my earlier work on movements, the counter-movement now seemed central to the dialectical development of a movement's rhetoric. What I did not appreciate is the pos-

[4] See *Western Speech*, 27 (1963).

[5] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 50 (1964), 113-35.

[6] In *Critical Response to Kenneth Burke: 1924-1966*, ed. William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis, 1969), pp. 456-78.

sibility of a counter-movement within the movement itself—a movement that, if it triumphs, may completely transform, or "kill," the original movement.

It is perhaps early for a rhetorical post-mortem on the New Left movement as a whole. But I suspect that it was a movement transformed, at some point, by an internal counter-movement, a kind of reverse Thermidorean reaction. And I suspect that this transformation may have been prefigured as early as November 22, 1963, when the movement led by Lee Harvey Oswald, however imaginary, came to its moment of crisis.

In any case, by 1969, the New Left movement had become a most visible phenomenon. And it was certainly clear that the movement was not developing in the spirit with which it began. For a movement that had begun with the "Dissent project" and such pivotal groups as Turn Toward Peace, a movement initiated in the name of "cooperation," "sanity (the rational)," "peace," "love," and "utopia," was clearly turning, as the sixties neared an end, toward violence. I must say that I found this depressing, a depression compounded, perhaps, by a feeling that had set in with the completion of the final section of the "Dramatistic Theory" essay. For the drive of the terminology of dramatism seemed inevitably toward "stasis," certainly for movements and by implication for "movement" itself. We all encounter the moment: "At any streetcorner," as Camus puts it, "the feeling of absurdity can strike any man in the face." What to do? One may adopt Burke's "comic" attitude: delight in the turning wheel, enjoy the task of Sisyphus, find salvation in the act of striving itself. This, as I wrote then and still believe, is the ultimate message of dramatism. But it is hard to avoid hearing the counterstatement of Ecclesiastes: all is vanity, a striving after the wind.

If the Preacher's attitude is pessimistic and negative, negative attitudes need not be unproductive. They may be necessary to innovation, certainly to the innovation of movements, at least to movements of protest. Such movements surely flourished during the latter half of the sixties and into the seventies, and there was a corresponding burgeoning of interest, particularly among young scholars in our field, in the study of the rhetoric of movements.

Certain of these scholars chose to comment on my work. Among the first was Edwin Black, whose *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* provided an important sanction for the study of movements with his recognition of movement studies as a distinctive genre of rhetorical criticism. At the time of his writing, as Black observed, only three movement studies, in addition to my theoretical essay on "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," had appeared in the national journals of our field. By the end of the seventies, in the recent calculation of Professor Stewart, more than 300 articles and chapters in contributed volumes have been published; and this increase is surely attributable, in large part, to the influence of Black's book.

In commenting on my essay, Black noted that my approach was one of historical relativism. So grand a label had not occurred to me when I recommended that movements should be evaluated with respect to the rhetorical theory indigenous to their times; my thought had merely been that since the rhetoric of a movement, like that of the single speech, is inevitably time-bound, the critic of a movement is equally bound by considerations of temporality. Black recognizes the point, of course, but goes on to argue that a relativistic stance not only inhibits the likelihood that an accumulation of movement studies might

result in the discovery of recurrent patterns in the rhetoric of movements, but that it also prevents the critic from taking advantage of the theoretical insights of his own time. His arguments are compelling and his label accurate. My dramatistic study of the emerging New Left movement, which appeared only months before the publication of his book, was as much an exercise in historical relativism as my earlier study of the Antimasonic movement had been. I believe, however, that if I were to examine that latter movement today, I would abandon Blair and Campbell for the delights of a dramatistic perspective. For not only is Burke fun to use—his generous approval of the use of "all that is there to use" seems to offer the critic the broadest of ranges for getting at the essence as well as the accidents of movements.

Black did not worry an issue that has proved of some concern to subsequent critics of "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements"—the charge that I failed to define the concept of "rhetorical movement." I had proposed that "the student's task is to isolate the rhetorical movement within the matrix of the historical movement: the rhetorical movement is the focus of his study." What I had in mind was the notion that other elements may be involved in a movement, such as "the forces of wealth or arms;" but that as students of rhetoric our concern is not with these (they would be the business of the historian) but with the evolving sequence of discourse that plays itself out, through successive stages of adherence, within the temporal framework of the larger, more encompassing "historical movement." In retrospect, I can see that I was writing at a time when young scholars in public address saw themselves, if not as historians, then as contributors to the greater enterprise in which historians were engaged. Within our own field, our effort was to provide the building blocks that would eventuate, at the hands of some synthesizing genius who would one day appear, in the construction of a definitive "History of Public Address in America." And this great volume, in turn, would contribute to the efforts of our colleagues in the Department of History, that authorized guardian of the study of the past.

It was this orientation toward "history," very likely, which led me to think of a rhetorical movement as the linguistic component of a historical movement; a symbolic progress, within the constraints of a larger historical movement, through periods of inception, crisis or judgment, and consummation. And so it was the *historical* movement which I chose to define, seeing it as a movement that has occurred when, "at some time in the past: 1. men have become dissatisfied with some aspect of their environment; 2. they desire change —social, economic, political, religious, intellectual, or otherwise—and desiring change, they make efforts to alter their environment; 3. eventually, their efforts result in some degree of success or failure; the desired change is, or is not, effected; and we may say that the historical movement has come to its termination."[7]

The internal rhetoric that constitutes one's thinking, in short, is as time-bound as the rhetoric of speeches or movements. The prevailing identification was with history when I began graduate study, and so I thought in terms of the "rhetoric of historical movements." During the last several decades, on the other hand, as increasing numbers of our younger rhetoricians have tended to identify with social science, there has

[7] "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," p. 184.

been a corresponding tendency to speak of the "rhetoric of social movements." This turn was marked by the publication, in 1970, of Professor Herbert W. Simons "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements." In that essay, Simons turned to the social scientists—specifically, to Smelzer, Turner and Killian—for his definition of a social movement: "an uninstitutionalized collectivity that mobilizes for action to implement a program for the reconstitution of social norms or values."[8] In the light of this definition, and with an emphasis on reformist and revolutionary movements, Simons proceeds to survey the rhetorical requirements, problems, and strategies of the leaders of such movements. And this sociological emphasis was continued, in a paper published two years later by Dan Hahn and Ruth Gonchar. In "Studying Social Movements: A Rhetorical Methodology," they demonstrate the utility of traditional categories—specifically *ethos, pathos, logos* and style—for the study of social movements, which they define, following Gusfield, as ". . . socially shared activities and beliefs directed toward the demand for change in some aspect of the social order."[9]

I have no quarrel at all with a sociological orientation to the criticism of movements. Any perspective that enables a critic to achieve insight into the rhetorical workings of a movement is to the benefit of us all, and experimentation with a variety of approaches is certainly to be desired. It was in something of this spirit, in addition to my proclivity toward relativism, that led me to apply Burkean procedures to the analysis of the New Left movement, and later to attempt the formulations in "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements."

In that essay, synthesizing a definition from the terminology of Kenneth Burke, I assumed that "all movements are essentially political, concerned with governance or dominion, 'the wielding and obeying of authority'; that 'politics above all is drama'; and that 'drama requires a conflict.' "[10] This definition would seem to be less historical or sociological than political, while the codicil that I provided, that "all movements are essentially moral—strivings for salvation, perfection, the 'good' "—would appear to make the definition theological. Certainly Burke's conception of the "moments" of the human drama, which I took to be the moments of movements, is theological: a progress from Order, Guilt, and the Negative, through Victimage and Mortification, to Catharsis and Redemption. My intention, however, was to formulate a *dramatistic* definition, which is to say a dialectical one; and in the effort to do so I came to realize the crucial role of the countermovement: for it is through the dialectical function of the countermovement that the movement achieves consummation or transcendence.

The dramatistic emphasis was continued by Robert S. Cathcart in an important essay published in 1972, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically." Cathcart felt, apparently, that my definition did not so much define as establish "the 'ground' for movements as well as a movement's rhetorical *raison d'etre*." If we looked "in this 'place' for these 'forms,' we should be able to find movements. It is not a historical place, but a dramatic situation where moral strivings for salvation bring human agencies into conflict." He

[8] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), p. 3.

[9] *Speech Teacher*, 20 (1971), 44.

[10] "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," p. 456.

went on to argue that movements cannot occur until aggressor rhetors, in demanding an immediacy of change, provoke a counter-response from "establishment" rhetors, and "it is this reciprocity or dialectical enjoinment in the moral arena' which serves to define movements. "The essential attribute," as he summarizes, "is the creation of a dialectical tension growing out of moral conflict.[11]

Cathcart's concept of "movement" as situational was reaffirmed by Michael C. McGee three years later in his "In Search of 'The People': A Rhetorical Alternative." He argues that in conceiving "rhetoric to operate within historical matrices (rather than seeing history executed within a range of rhetorical possibilities)," I was led "to think of 'movement' as a *physical* motion toward the repeal of a law or condition." By so doing, McGee reasons, I "confused an event—'agitation'—with a situation—'movement.'" He is commenting, of course, on the definition I advanced in "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements." Whether his reservations would apply to the dramatistic definitions of my later essay and Cathcart's is unclear. Certainly he shares Cathcart's concern for a "rhetorical" definition of movements, as he indicates in saying that in turning to history, politics, or empirical sociology, we are "in effect giving up the right of definition and interpretation," and adding that "it should be possible for rhetoricians *directly* to study 'movement' as *linguistic* process contained in and defined by the rhetorical *situation*, not the rhetorical *event*."[12]

Other than the hope that we would not be prompted by motives of disciplinary chauvinism, I have no reservations concerning the search for a specifically rhetorical definition of movements. Indeed I had thought to move toward such a definition in observing that "man moves through the moments of his drama, which are also the moments of his movements: moves, all told, from Order, Guilt, and the Negative, through Victimage and Mortification, to Catharsis and Redemption. He moves, and is moved, through speech—through the rhetorical power of the word, the persuasive power of language (for rhetoric is the essentially human mode of striving)."[13] The dramatistic situation seems to me in essence linguistic or rhetorical. And the one reservation I would have concerning Cathcart's definition—including the refinement of that definition in his recent "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form"—is the notion that confrontation, or dialectical enjoinment, is the "necessary ingredient" that distinguishes movements.[14] It is a vital ingredient, to be sure. In my own analysis of the dramatistic structures of movements I saw it, and still do, as the second strategy of the inception period, a strategy" . . . designed to infuse the "priests" of the existing order . . . with attitudes of rejection and Guilt toward the movement; attitudes that will impel them to the act of opposition—to the organization of a counter-movement, a reactive corps of defendant rhetors that will give salience to the errant symbols of the existing order."[15] But to say that movements do not begin until confrontation occurs seems to me unduly limiting. It is to risk the danger of excluding from study a body of discourse that merits attention. Our chief business, after all, is the study of rhetoric and rhetors, and the analysis of failure may be as rewarding as of success. If no more

[11] *Western Speech*, 36 (1972), p. 87.
[12] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 236.
[13] "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," pp. 457-58.
[14] *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 43 (1978), 233-47.
[15] "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," pp. 463-64.

than a single rhetor rises up and says No in the name of a movement, if his hearers are few and his efforts come to nothing, I would suggest that his "movement" might still deserve study. Or to go to the end of the line: if one can posit, in the interest of definition, the thought of real toads in imaginary gardens, why not the thought that even imaginary movements might be of consequence in the world of reality. For here again is a form of rhetorical striving, and it is the study of such striving that remains the chief good and market of our time.

It is in the same sense that I see as limiting the suggestion of Smith and Windes that "rhetorical movements can be defined as the set of [illegible] which includes mobilization and [illegible] such appeals are clearly important, they are only a phase of the larger movement of a movement, the appeals that constitute the first strategy of the second phase of the inception period:

> As the rhetoric of dissent does its work of corrosion, and rhetor and counter-rhetor begin to flower into public notice, the movement enters the second phase of the period of inception—turns to a rhetoric of conversion and catharsis. Its first strategy is to promote decision, to *convert* the estranged; to "turn toward" the movement increasing numbers of the alienated, the undecided. . . . It is a strategy designed to convert the impious, to convince them that by attitude they are *of* the movement, and by reason and justice ought to be *in* it; that the movement as the opponent of the counter-movement, which speaks for the state of Corruption, constitutes a Saving Rebellion—a striving for salvation, perfection, the "good."[17]

This quotation may serve also as evidence for the charge that both Cathcart and I, perhaps because of the preoccupations of the sixties, embrace an "establishment-conflict" theory of movements, and that "the scholar wedded to the establishment-conflict theory must feature speakers calling for radical change."[18] It may be that there is a bias toward a revolutionary concept of action in the dramatistic perspective. Still, in going on to develop their theory of "innovational movements," movements designed to achieve not revolution but reform, Smith and Windes manage to do so within an essentially dramatistic framework. And the "rhetorical definition of movements" more recently formulated by Wilkinson, a definition dramatistic to the core, would appear to accommodate any movement, whatever its intentions with respect to the status quo: "Languaging strategies by which a significantly vocal part of an established society, experiencing together a sustained dialectical tension growing out of moral (ethical) conflict, agitate to induce cooperation in others, either directly or indirectly, thereby affecting the status quo."[19]

Perhaps those of us interested in the dramatistic perspective could content ourselves, at least for the present, with Wilkinson's definition, and get on with the larger business of the actual study of movements. The search for a definition, by definition a search for limitations, may have the danger of being limiting. It was certainly not my intention, in turning to the dramatistic approach in my own study of movements, to suggest that this was the approach to be preferred. I find it capable of yielding insight into the workings of movements—studies by Rosenwasser, Hancock, Wilkinson and Zarefsky, to name a token few, surely

[16] Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "The Rhetoric of Mobilization: Implications for the Study of Movements," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 42 (1976), 1.

[17] "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," p. 464.

[18] Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 142.

[19] Charles A. Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (1976), 91.

testify to its heuristic value.[20] But it is only one approach; and our need now, it seems to me, is not for limitations but for a marked broadening in the scope and range of our efforts.

Such a broadening has, in fact, been under way for some time. I see it in the very effort of Smith and Windes to distinguish the innovational movement as a discrete genre. I see it in Zarefsky's identification of the three "establishment" movements within President Johnson's War on Poverty. I see it in the distinctions drawn by Cathcart between "managerial" and "confrontational" rhetoric with respect to the typology of movements.[21] I see it in the work of Windt, Campbell, Chesebro, and others interested in approaching movements from a generic perspective.[22] I see it in a range of studies, from the varied approaches of Andrews, Gronbeck, and Lucas, to Clark's recent examination of the "masking" function of a movement's rhetoric, Foss' application of Burke and Bormann in a "fantasy theme" analysis of the rhetoric of a pro movement, and Solomon's explication, through "mythic analysis," of the rhetorical structure of a counter movement.[23] And certainly I saw it at San Antonio, on the occasion of Simons' seminar on the rhetoric of social movements, as the pluralism of the essays in this issue of the *Central States Speech Journal* should make clear.

I would hope that our interest in movement studies might continue through the decade ahead. I would hope that we would continue to welcome a variety of conceptions of movement and approaches to their analysis. Questions remain as to definition, form, motivation, methodology, and meaning. We need to know more about the rhetoric of movements in their entirety, just as we need more understanding of the rhetorical structures and functions of periods of inception, crisis and consummation. In our darker moments, such efforts may seem futile—at worst, a striving after the wind; at best, as fruitless as the hope of counting the cats of Zanzibar. "It is not worthwhile." Thoreau tells us, "to go round the world to count the cats of Zanzibar." But he adds, "Yet do this even till you can do better, and you may yet find some 'Symmes' Hole" by which to get at the inside at last."[24] Even so. How do we know what is to be found if those inclined to count cats do not make the venture? They should not be discouraged.

[20] Marie J. Rosenwasser, "Rhetoric and the Progress of the Women's Liberation Movement," *Today's Speech*, 20 (1972), 45-56; Brenda Robinson Hancock, "Affirmation by Negation in the Women's Liberation Movement," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), pp. 264-71; Charles A. Wilkinson, "The Rhetoric of Movements: Definition and Methodological Approach, Applied to the Catholic Anti-War Movement in the United States," Diss. Northwestern University 1974; David Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establishment' Movements," *Communication Monographs*, 44 (1977), 352-73.

[21] Cathcart, "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," p. 237.

[22] Theodore O. Windt, Jr., "The Diatribe: Last Resort for Protest," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 1-14; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 74-86; James W. Chesebro, "Cultures in Conflict—A Generic and Axiological View," *Today's Speech*, 21 (1973), 11-20.

[23] James R. Andrews, "The Passionate Negation: The Chartist Movement in Rhetorical Perspective," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 196-208; Bruce E. Gronbeck "The Rhetoric of Social-Institutional Change: Black Action at Michigan," in *Explorations in Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Charles Stewart, G. P. Mohrmann, and Donovan J. Ochs, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1973), 96-123; Stephen E. Lucas, *Portents of Rebellion: Rhetoric and Revolution in Philadelphia, 1765-1776* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976); Thomas D. Clark, "Rhetoric, Reality, and Rationalization: A Study of the Masking Function of Rhetoric in the London Theosophical Movement," *Communication Quarterly*, 26 (1978), 24-30; Sonja K. Foss, "Equal Rights Amendment Controversy: Two Worlds in Conflict," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (1979), 275-88; Martha Solomon, "The 'Positive Woman's' Journey: A Mythic Analysis of the Rhetoric of Stop ERA," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (1979), 262-74.

[24] See Henry Thoreau, *Walden*, "Conclusion."

"SOCIAL MOVEMENT": PHENOMENON OR MEANING?

Michael Calvin McGee

THE problem before me is determining whether or not the rhetoric of social movements constitutes a distinctive theoretical domain. I want to say "of course," but I cannot: Like dramaturgists with the concept "script," and psychohistorians with the concept "fantasy," social theorists have failed to shoulder the burden of defending the empirical relevance and/or utility of one of their most basic concepts, "social movement."[1] Since I would not like being read as arguing definitions, as many do, I intend to demonstrate that when I say "Social movement is a set of meanings and not a phenomenon," my reference is to a significant error of conceptualization. I believe that the rhetoric of social movements may become a distinctive theoretical domain, but only as a theory of human consciousness. The second part of this essay is an elaboration of that conviction.

I

As I understand the process of theory-building, if it is to achieve the status "theory," any prose must reliably describe, explain, and predict something directly or inferentially in human experience.[2] There is no doubt that "social movement(s)" exist in human experience, but there is serious disagreement about *how* they exist.[3] The critical problem for theorists is determining whether "social movement" is *directly* or *inferentially* in human experience. If a thing is directly in experience, it is a "phenomenon;" if it is inferentially in experience, it is an interpretation, a "set of meanings."

Descriptions, explanations, and predictions of phenomena are theories of *things* "out there" which present themselves equally to all human beings. In the social world, then, institutions and organizations such as the U. S. Congress and Standard Oil Corporation are phenomena present to each of us re-

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[1] For a much more detailed defense of the claim that conceptual failures currently hamper the development of all social and political sciences, see W. Lance Bennett, *The Political Mind and the Political Environment: An Investigation of Public Opinion and Political Consciousness* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1975), especially pp. 4-25, 80-103, 110-11. See also Gareth Stedman Jones, "From Historical Sociology to Theoretical History," *British Journal of Sociology*, 27 (1976); 295-305.

[2] In my view, theory must (a) formally advance a generalization which (b) resolves a mystery apt to be confronted in daily experience. The truth-claim advanced (c) must be demonstrably reliable when it is measured against (d) some, but no particular, clearly articulated epistemic standard. A *complete* theory provides (e) a conceptually clear and formal *description* of the object of theorizing, (f) an *explanation* of the origin and salience of the object, and (g) criteria useful in *prediction* of probable outcome in future encounters with like objects.

[3] See Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1979), especially pp. 165-233; Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. Alan M. Sheridan-Smith (1969; Eng. trans. New York: Harper, 1972); J. G. A. Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time* (New York: Atheneum, 1973); Rosalind Coward and John Ellis, *Language and Materialism: Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977).

gardless of our political views or personal experience with them. Descriptions, explanations, and predictions of meaning, on the other hand, are theories of *consciousness*, of human agreements as to the significance, salience, utility and morality of phenomena. Thus, in the social world, policies and ideologies such as "containment" and "imperialism" are sets of meanings inferentially held by the whole or a significant part of society.

Theories of things, of course, can take consciousness into account, and theories of consciousness can explain the rise, fall or persistence of phenomena. For example, Whyte's classic study of American business organizations suggests convincingly that the reward system forces human beings to display the signs of a particular consciousness, whereas Horkheimer's equally classic study of "authority" shows persuasively that interactions in the nuclear family explain the emergence of totalitarian states and institutions.[4] The problem is not connecting phenomena and meanings, therefore, but rather deciding which explains what.

If I witness the phenomenon "man speaking," and if I am curious about the content of what is being said, a conceptual choice between at least two alternatives[5] looms before me: (a) I can decide that the phenomenon "comes first" and say that "speaking" and "content" are properties, components, or manifestations of the whole phenomenon. I hear "man speaking" claiming to be "reasonable," and I agree that what I hear is "reasonable." I am not thus far in error, but if I go further in regarding a *quality* of "speaking" ("reasonable") as if it were a property of the phenomenon itself ("reason"), I have made a mistake. I have rediscovered a formally correct but empirically irrelevant 18th-century notion, "faculty psychology."[6] (b) On the other hand, I can decide that sets of meanings "come first" and argue that "speaking" and "content" are signifiers, articulation, or material manifestations of a particular consciousness which I recognize as more or less common. I hear "man speaking" claim that "Standard Oil is a cancer on American democracy" and interpret the words as indicating that "man speaking" does not like "Standard Oil" and that, in his view, policies toward "Standard Oil" should function much as treatments for a deadly disease function. Again, I am not thus far in error, but if I go further and view a phenomenon ("Standard Oil") as if it necessarily implied one specific set of meanings (one's policy toward things metaphorically regarded as "cancerous"), I have made a fundamental mistake reciprocating the error which produced faculty psychology.[7] The error in both cases is that I have confused phenomena and interpretations.

Most writers on the subject, particularly those working under the influence of

[4] See William H. Whyte, Jr., *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1956); Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell et al. (New York: Seabury, 1972), pp. 47-128.

[5] A conceivable third alternative would require us to recognize the "speaking" and "content" as identities and as themselves the object of study, "coming first" in the attempt to explain phenomena as the grounding of signification (the "ultimate signified") and in the attempt to understand human consciousness "imprisoned" in its material manifestation, language. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, trans. Richard C. McCleary (1960; Eng. trans. Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1964); Jacques Lacan, *Écrits, A Selection*, trans. Alan M. Scheridan-Smith (New York: W. W. Norton, 1977); and Fredric Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1972).

[6] See Gary Lynn Cronkhite, "Logic, Emotion, and the Paradigm of Persuasion," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 50 (1964), 13-18.

[7] See Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 22-29.

American empirical sociology, treat social movements as if they were phenomenal. Smelser, for example, chooses the term "collective behavior" as a synthesis of "collective outbursts" (panics, crazes, and hostile outbursts) and "collective movements" (a collective effort to modify norms and values). Having suggested that perceptions of collective behavior are "spontaneous and fickle," that episodes of collective behavior "cannot be controlled experimentally," and that case studies of collective behavior cannot be demonstrated to be typical, he asks the question, "To what kinds of phenomena does this term refer?" Smelser has, in my judgment, answered his question before he begins. "Collective behavior," as he uses the term, cannot possibly refer to phenomena; rather, his disclaimers suggest that if we have a subject of study at all, it is *meaning*. Yet Smelser continues by associating collective behavior with particular situations which are "determinants" of belief and attitude. Specifically refusing materialist, symbolist, and psychological descriptions of the human consciousness, Smelser proceeds to identify the phenomenal situation in which collective behavior occurs with the collective behavior itself. By the time he has identified "movements," he seems to be talking strictly about political organizations and assumes that there is a correspondence between one's membership in an organization and one's universe of attitudes and beliefs.[8]

In communication studies, too, "social movements" are treated as phenomenal. Indeed, Simons has suggested that there is now a "near consensus" as to the identity of "movement," that "social movement" is now part of "conventional scholarly parlance," and that securing paradigmatic agreement as to "conceptual geography" is no longer a problem. Simons' "near consensus" appears to be an agreement that differences in the usage of "movement" reflect differences in "disciplinary perspective rather than differences in the phenomena." In the mold of American empirical sociology, Simons objectivates "social movement" by giving the alleged phenomenon an almost organic presence: "Any student of movements must come to grips with the mix of elements that comprise movements of whatever sort: *their* structural and functional characteristics; *their* origins in society and culture; *their* evolution over time; the resources *they* mobilize and deploy; the power wielded against *them;* the ideas that *animate them;* the symbolic acts and artifacts that embody those ideas; and the intended and unintended effects that movements produce" (italics mine). So clear is Simons' treatment of "social movements" as if "they" were phenomena that he consistently commits the pathetic fallacy and comes dangerously close to the organic metaphor Nisbet so roundly condemns.[9]

[8] Though he cautions the reader that he is using "collective behavior" in a highly technical sense, Smelser using a persuasive definition. He wishes to argue that such behaviors as panics, crazes, hostile outbursts, and "movements" are distinct *in kind* from ordinary social behaviors. But this remains an assertion in his theory, for he fails to confront the sense in which *all* social behavior is collective behavior, distinct from what he wishes to *call* "collective" only in interpretive judgments an observer might make about the rationality, the utility, or the morality of the behavior. See Neil J. Smelser, *Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1962), pp. 2-21.

[9] Herbert W. Simons, Elizabeth Mechling, and Howard N. Schrier, "Functions of Communication in Mobilizing for Collective Action From the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," in *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory*, ed. Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers, (Boston: Allyn & Bacon), in press. See also, Herbert W. Simons, "Commentary on Zarefsky's Paper," Working Papers of Seminar on Rhetoric and Social Movements, Speech Communication Association, San Antonio TX, November 1979, p. 6: "The term 'social movement' and the definition of that construct typically provided by sociologists have become part of conventional scholarly

"Social movement(s)" are not phenomena *as a matter of fact*, and creating a theory from such a conception is to create the sociological or rhetorical equivalent of "faculty psychology." In one sense, developing this argument is easy, for all that need be demonstrated is the widely-recognized ambiguity of the alleged phenomenon we are to call "movement(s)."[10] If I speak of "Civil Rights Movement," "Labor Movement," or "Feminist Movement," I am referring either to a series of behaviors or to a political organization which I could designate in several ways. Thus, when I see angry picketers blocking the entrance to a factory, I might conceptualize my experience with the agency of one or another of the following signifiers, each with its own nuance: (a) "campaign," (b) "agitation," (c) "rebellion," (d) "organization," (e) "cabal," (f) "revolution," (g) "protest," (h) "sociopathic outburst," (i) "demonstration," (j) "alienation," (k) "petitioning for redress of grievances," (l) "symbolic action and/or transcendence," (m) "instrumental behavior," (n) "subversion," (o) "industrial sabotage," or (p) "social movement." Each choice represents an attitudinal/stylistic alternative with the power to express an individuated ordering of social reality and to dictate the nature of any generalization I might subsequently offer. Each term, in other words, is a *meaning*, a conclusion one comes to about the phenomenon being witnessed. Of course, one is not only entitled to such conclusions, but also generally encouraged to seek them. No error is involved in seeing a parade of picketers as a "social movement." The mistake is treating the meaning as if it were itself a phenomenon: The objective, empirical phenomeon of human beings angrily parading in front of a fence stays the same despite my choice of one term or another to characterize and conceptualize it. When I operate as a theorist by fiat of definition, therefore, insisting that there are "determinants" or "defining characteristics" which make the phenomenal episode "social movement" and nothing else, I am either politicizing my theory or imputing motives to human actors by fiat of definition only. In the first case, I would accept the claim of human actors that their activity is a "social movement," and that claim might not be theoretically motivated, but merely a ploy to gain power by controlling the perceptions of potential adherents and opponents. In the other case, I would consider the claims, or lack of claims, of social actors irrelevant. I would infer "determinants" or "defining characteristics" from the episode which make *my* meaning seem to characterize and motivate participating social actors. Neither tactic is, in my judgment, theoretically justifiable. "Movements" are not phenomena, nor does the concept "movement" explain a phenomenon empirically; rather, "movement" is an analogue comparing the flow of social

parlance. Given that there is near-consensus, and given that general agreement on terms and definitions enables a scholarly community to move on to other profitable issues, I believe that we should accept the sociological conception unless very good reasons can be provided to the contrary. Thus far I have not heard those good reasons." Cf. Robert A. Nisbet, *Social Change and History* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1969), especially pp. 251-67.

[10] I have yet to read a book on "social movement(s)" conceived as a phenomenon which did *not* assert the difficulty of distinguishing forms of "mass phenomena." Typically, writers survey the English language for terms which journalists have or might use to describe unusual mass behaviors. Such terms are then organized, usually orthogonally, with some variation of "size" (genus/species, e.g.) on one axis and some variation of degree of organization (formal/informal, e.g.) on the other. After fifty years of research and development, the continued need to define *a priori* (and *then* proceed to ask "To what kinds of phenomena does this term refer?"), seems to bespeak such conceptual confusion that one wonders if it might not be the case that "collective behavior flows from sources beyond empirical explanation."

facts to physical movement. It is an interpretation of phenomenal data controlled less by what happens in the real world than by what a particular user of the analogue wants to see in the real world. If I were to distinguish "social movement(s)" from the other sixteen interpretive alternatives listed above, I would say on the basis of our experience with major "movements" of this century—communism, fascism, unionism, and egalitarianism—that the term "social movement(s)" causes us to order social and historical facts such that we can maintain the illusion of "morality," "purpose," and "destiny" in largely self-aggrandizing collective behavior.[11]

My conclusion, of course, depends on recognizing that "movement" is neither a neolog nor a univocal neutral term. That is, I presume that consciousness of "movement" is in the public mind and therefore in ordinary language and that the etymology and currency of the term in two intellectual traditions makes the proposition "movement is a phenomenon" an arguable claim, not simply an operational definition. And that is the rub, for the claim that "movement is a phenomenon" rests historically and presently on the theorist's prerogative to attach any label to any phenomenon in any context which sensibly suits the purpose of theorizing. There is no test which we may use to "prove" a descriptor, since definitions are by nature arbitrary understandings meant to facilitate thinking rather than be the subject of dispute. But we should take care that such understandings do not actually cloud and disrupt thinking. If the function of a definition is to confuse a perspective toward a fact with the fact itself, the exercise is not truly definitional, but conceptual.

Though the line between "concept" and "definition" is subtle, it has been drawn often and with profit.[12] In fact, there are *tests* of conceptualization, mechanisms which we can use to demonstrate the utility or descriptiveness of one way of conceiving sensible facts as opposed to another. Mathematical modeling, for example, can show us unintentional errors of causation in generalizations made by researchers who, blinded by the specificity of their work, can come to reasonable but empirically irrelevant interpretations of their data.[13] When one realizes that the sentence "Movement is a phenomenon" is more an argumentative claim than an operational definition, the intellectual history of the problem "movement" performs the same function as mathematical modeling. That is, by reconstructing the debate which seems to end in the proposition "Movement is a phenomenon," we can understand the intentional origins of the variant conceptions of "movement" and, therefore, some of the theoretical consequences of choosing to believe the proposition. When I survey the history of the concept "movement," then, I mean not to suggest that there is an aura of "legitimacy" in

11 See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Critique of Dialectical Reason: A Theory of Practical Ensembles*, trans. Alan Sheridan-Smith, ed. Jonathon Ree (London: NLB, 1976), pp. 256-341. Something of the dilemma of intellectuals at once desiring "scientific" theory and to avoid Mannheim's paradox (the choice between politicizing theory and imputing motives is captured in J. A. Hall, "The Roles and Influence of Political Intellectuals: Tawney vs. Sidney Webb," *British Journal of Sociology*, 28 (1977), 351-62. In my mind the clear alternative is to abandon phenomenal or behavioral empiricism in favor of symbolic or "hermeneutic" empiricism.

12 See, for example, Alfred Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, trans. George Walsh and Frederick Lehnert (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1967), pp. 215-50; Roger Poole, *Towards Deep Subjectivity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), pp. 44-77.

13 See, e.g., Dean Hewes, "Finite Stochastic Modeling of Communication Processes," *Human Communication Research*, 1 (1975), 271-83; Joseph N. Cappella, "Talk-Silence Sequences in Informal Conversations I," *Human Communication Research*, 6 (1979), 8-14.

earlier characterizations of "movement," but rather that the history of the concept reveals the pragmatic and ideal pitfalls awaiting those who make ill-advised conceptual choices.[14]

The analogue "movement" first came into the English language in 1828 as a trans'iteration of the French idiom *dans le mouvement*, with specific reference to "Oxford" and "Labor" movements. The French idiom called up images of lemming-like behavior. To refer to Cardinal Newman's theology and Feargus O'Connor's agitation as "movement" was journalistically to organize curious behaviors into a scenario which could be used politically both to oppose and to tolerate the activity of fringe social groups.[15] It so happened that the term was chosen by intellectuals at a time when learning was marked by an emerging historical consciousness, an awareness of the ways prior human activity constrain immediate choice. "Movement" was thus seen as "historical." The "swim" human beings find themselves caught up in is the product of an "historical order," a causal sequencing of events, characters, episodes which is "movement" from past to present. Hegel, Carlyle, Marx, Comte, and Von Ranke suggested that the past contained evidence of human destiny which in time would lead to formulary "laws of history." Thinkers influenced by Marx, Comte and Von Ranke attempted to adapt empirical methods developed in the natural sciences to create a "science of history" and thus used the past as a data base for theory construction.[16] Other writers used Hegel and Carlyle as models for an enterprise which consisted of rewriting history to conform to traditional patterns of Western moral beliefs. Goldwyn Smith, for example, saw "true" history as "the embodiment of pure morality and true religion."[17] The tension between these ideas of "movement" created a century-long debate. The question, however, was not about "movement," for everyone was then agreed that history "moves" in directions which can be known. The issue was materialism versus idealism: The dispute was over *what* 'moves' in history—the material things which are our physical environment or the human ideas which mediate and interpret the facts of our experience?

As Richard Weaver explains, the "historicism" of such figures as Marx and Carlyle came under rigorous attack from writers acquainted with Vienna positivism.[18] The critique has been more methodological than conceptual, however. The question "*What* 'moves' in history?" was considered illegitimate because it was "paratheoretical," not because "movement" is an inappropriate metaphor for human collective behavior.[19] Marx could not prove that

[14] Within what I understand to be Cappella's meaning, I am suggesting that we regard the sentence "Movement is a phenomenon" as an "intentional communication" at least figuratively "uttered" in a conversation begun about the year 1828. See Joseph N. Cappella, "The Functional Prerequisites of Intentional Communicative Systems," *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 5 (1972), 231-47.

[15] See Herbert Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance," in Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore, Jr., and Herbert Marcuse, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (Boston: Beacon, 1968), pp. 81-123.

[16] See Howard Becker and Harry Elmer Barnes, *Social Thought from Lore to Science*, 3rd ed., 3 vols (New York: Dover, 1961), 2:560-787.

[17] Goldwyn Smith, *Lectures on the Study of History* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1873), p. 44. See also, Benedetto Croce, *History as the Story of Liberty*, trans. Syvia Sprigge (London: Allen & Unwin, 1941).

[18] See Richard Weaver, *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953), pp. 211-32; and Richard Weaver, "Concealed Rhetoric in Scientistic Sociology," Richard L. Johannesen, Rennard Strickland and Ralph T. Eubanks, eds., *Language is Sermonic: Richard M. Weaver on the Nature of Rhetoric* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana St. Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 139-58.

[19] See Karl R. Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism*, 3rd ed. (1961; rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1964); M. M. Bober, *Karl Marx's Inter-*

"the dialectic" actually existed in history, the argument went, and in the absence of positive proof, we should believe instead that it was invented rather than discovered by Marx and imposed on rather than derived from history. Hence, the classic "problem of mediation" or "fallacy of imputation" was posed.[20] A failure of method, of course, can always be corrected in the romantically rational world of the positivist. "Movement" was a useful concept which needed only specification and translation in terms of verifiably observable human activity. Thus, in specific response to historicist theses, the argument "Movement is a phenomenon" was advanced. In the United States, there is a linear, unobstructed development of this viewpoint from La Piere to Heberle to Smelser and other contemporaries.[21] Only recently has what Lichtheim called "the conservative sterility of academic positivism" become apparent to Americans who ponder "movement" sociologically. Simons is not alone in drawing from German phenomenology alternatives to the rigid methodological catechism of positivism.[22] But however much I applaud such advances, I also worry that the critique remains at the level of methodology rather than conception. I believe, in other words, that Simons et al. reject positivism in the study of "movement" while retaining the conterproductive positivist first premise, that "Movement is a phenomenon."

When we think of it as a thrust in an argument rather than as an operational definition, the proposition "Movement is a phenomenon" illustrates three logical fallacies: (a) it is a *tu quoque;* (b) it is an unwarranted *reductio;* and (c) it works by affirming a consequent rather than by establishing a condition.

(a) Positivists and pragmatists intended to reject both Marxist and Idealist historicism on the ground that interpretations of the past could not be replicated, that "movement" was an analogy only and not provable with the facts of history. But as Polanyi and Ziman both have argued, the difference

pretation of History, 2nd ed. (1948; rpt. New York: Norton, 1965).

20 See Willard A. Mullins, "Truth and Ideology: Reflections on Mannheim's Paradox," *History and Theory*, 4 (1956): 164-95; Martin Seliger, *The Marxist Conception of Ideology: A Critique* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 129-201; Douglas Kellner, "Ideology, Marxism and Advanced Captalism," *Socialist Review*, 8 (1978), 37-66.

21 See, for example, Richard T. LaPiere, *Collective Behavior* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1934); Rudolf Heberle, *Social Movements* (New York: Appleton Century-Crofts, 1951); Smelser; Nisbet; John A. Rex, "The Spread of the Pathology of Natural Science to the Social Sciences," *The Sociological Review*, Monograph 16 (1970), 143-62.

22 George Lichtheim, "Sartre, Marxism, and History," *History and Theory*, 2 (1963), 229. With just the hint of contradicting their earlier conceptual base, Simons et al. borrow from Peter Berger's *Sacred Canopy* the notion that human beings in collectivity have the capacity to dictate the conditions of "objectivity," that we "socially construct" reality and then externalize and reprocess our objectivated conceptions. Berger follows Luckmann, Schutz, and others in rejecting any argument which holds that the "out there" world is anything other than *the embodiment of meaning*. Simons sees in this model a synthesis of the "objectivist" and "interactionist" views of movement, but as far as I can tell, Berger's is an unambiguous statement of the interactionist view, and a rejection of what Simons calls "objectivism." Simons confuses "objectivism" and the standard "interactionist" term "objectivation." Though there is always a dialectical relationship between the individual and the objectivated social world, Berger (pp. 60-61) reminds us that "It is important to keep in mind that the objectivity of the institutional world, however massive it may appear to the individual, is a humanly produced, constructed objectivity." The hint of contradiction, of course, is magnified in Simon's exchange with Zarefsky. There Simons argued strongly for the *exclusion* of "institutionalized movements" from our conception "social movement," but according to Berger and Luckmann, *the only thing which can be objectivated is precisely a social institution!* Contrast Simons, Mechling and Schreier, pp. 48-59 with Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967), pp. 60-61, 104-28; and Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann, *The Structure of the Life-World*, trans. Richard M. Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr. (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 261-304.

between historicism and even theoretical physics is in this respect a difference of degree, not of kind.[23] There is always a problem of mediation. Because "movement" is not by any claim purely empirical, our very recognition of something so conventional as "Labor Movement" depends on an interpretation rather than data. However closely we define a particular "movement," the existence of the term in ordinary language increases the probability that it is an *a priori* label pressed from the mind either of the theorist or of the political activist onto the social events witnessed. This is not to say that earlier historicist usages are to be preferred; rather, if it was a fallacy for Marx to confuse discovery and invention, it is also a fallacy for Simons to confuse discovery and invention.

(b) Further, beyond the annoying inelegance of *tu quoque*, the proposition "Movement is a phenomenon" seems to be an unwarranted *reductio*. There is a "swim of things" which catches each of us in the impulse to demonstrate how secure we can be in the comfortable confines of collectivity. The "swim of things" is an urge, a drive to make collective behavior more comfortable and human existence therefore more "meaningful." Hegel, Marx, Carlyle, and Von Ranke posed a set of questions directly related to the experience, not of particular facts, but of a *zeitgeist*: How are "meaning" and "pattern" perceived in human social life? Where does this "swim" originate, and where does it go? Do such concepts as "progress" and "human destiny" have any capital? Such questions necessarily are begged by sociological conceptions because the expressed need to define an interpretive analogy as an empirical fact requires us to translate human fear and hope into human behavior and social fact. We cannot even use the *word* directly when we write theories: Thus, in the conceptual system Simons et al. suggest, "social movement," seems to mean little more than "organization," "industry," and/or "sector."[24] There is nothing in such operational translations about human consciousness of "movement": All the questions inspired by the nineteenth-century analogy disappear in the study of what are conceived to be *things*. Put another way, Simons et al. do not *require* either the concept "movement" or the concept "rhetoric;" they say nothing about the human condition which could not be said with the term "organizational communication," and they say nothing at all about the *meaning* of collective life, about "progress" and "human destiny."

(c) Finally, the claim "Movement is a phenomenon" works only by affirming the consequent. A "Civil Rights Movement," for example, comes to be recognized, even to *exist* as "movement," not because a writer carefully compared "organization" or "behavior" to well-thought-out theoretical models of "movement," but rather because a group of alienated individuals chose to define the nature and direction of their political behavior with the analogue "movement." Nor it is difficult to explain such choice, for it is no accident that a sociological conception of "movement" first appears in a context of determinism. In the terms of nineteenth-century social theory, a "movement" is always and inevitably successful because it is propelled by history itself. No matter what we do, no matter how we attempt to alter historical forces, the "movement" drones on in 4-4 time, never impeded for more

[23] See Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, corrected ed. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 3-17, 132-202; and John Ziman, *Public Knowledge* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 13-29, 77-101.

[24] See Simons, Mechling and Schreier, especially pp. 3-7.

than a trice. It is *this* meaning which survived the demise of historicism, *this* meaning which is an indispensable part of communist, fascist, unionist and egalitarian ideologies. A politician, even in the United States, would have to be a fool to call an attempt to use the brute power of an aroused collectivity anything other than "movement." Thus, if we agree that an organization calling itself "Hitler Youth Movement" *in fact* is an empirical specification of the concept "movement," we thereby grant an aura of academic or theoretical legitimacy to a patently rhetorical ploy. Put in logical form, we would be saying "If social movement existed empirically, surely people in fact would organize themselves into groups called 'movements.' Since people have organized themselves into groups they call 'movements,' then social movement exists empirically and can be studied objectively." That tactic, characteristically employed by such lights of American empirical sociology as Smelser and Bell, affirms a consequent.[25]

If we choose to believe that "Movement is a phenomenon," I conclude, the product of our work will always be theoretically suspect and as empirically irrelevant as Simons et al. observe "objectivist" sociological theory to be.[26] We could justify our most fundamental concepts against competing Marxian and structuralist alternatives only by claiming as a weakness in our competitors' logic of assumptions that we ourselves make. We would always be hard-pressed to transcend specificity, unable to answer the abidingly interesting questions originally posed with the concept "movement." And we would be obliged to ground operational methods in formal and informal logical fallacies, thereby opening ourselves not only to the charge that we are sloppy scientists, but even to the suggestion that our procedures tend to foster a political loading of allegedly descriptive theoretical constructs.[27]

II

What are the alternatives? Assuming that we have no more wish to associate ourselves with the homilies of orthodox Marxism than to drink the bitter residues of positivism, I believe that we should encourage Zarefsky, Hyde and Smith, Carleton, Frentz and Farrell, McGuire, and others in developing concepts of communication in general and "movement" in particular which focus on the problems of meaning and interpretation.[28] That is, if the study of

[25] Smelser rejects out of hand the possibility that "collective behavior flows from sources beyond empirical explanation," defines "collective behavior" eccentrically and technically as an *a priori* construct, and proceeds to adduce examples and to find phenomena which fit his prior distinctions. As Dolbeare and Dolbeare indicate, Daniel Bell worked the same alchemy with the construct "ideology." See Smelser, pp. 1-21; Daniel Bell, *The End of Ideology* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1960); Kenneth M. Dolbeare and Patricia Dolbeare, *American Ideologies* (Chicago: Markham, 1971), pp. 1-21.

[26] See Simons, Mechling and Schreier, p. 50, where they develop this argument.

[27] The concrete human behaviors one would like to perceive as "revolutionary" or part of a "movement" are clearly distinguishable from ordinary criminal behavior only by the value judgment that something inherent in the society legitimates sociopathic conduct. What might seem a simple operational labeling in theory, therefore, could be in practice a stamp of legitimacy (even of approval) for erstwhile criminal behavior, transforming, for example, the "Bader-Meinhoff Gang" of terrorists into an incipient "revolutionary movement" of crusaders against oppression.

[28] See David Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establishment' Movements," *Communication Monographs*, 44 (1977), 352-73; Michael J. Hyde and Craig R. Smith, "Hermeneutics and Rhetoric: A Seen but Unobserved Relationship," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (1979), 347-63; Walter M. Carleton, "What is Rhetorical Knowledge? A Response to Farrell—And More," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 64 (1978), 313-28; Michael McGuire, "Mythic Rhetoric in *Mein Kampf*: A Structuralist Critique," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 1-13; Thomas B. Farrell and Thomas S. Frentz, "Communication and Mean-

"movement" is ever to become a "distinctive theoretical domain," I believe that it must be as a "hermeneutic" theory, not as a purely "behavioral" or "phenomenal" theory. I would like to seek an account of human consciousness, not an account of human organizational behavior. Both technical and practical perceptions of "movement" suggest that human beings *want* to see their environment described as an ordered progression of mutually salient episodes. The possibility that life is nothing more than a cosmic joke, a random and entropic set of essentially irrelevant experiences, is so unflattering that we tend to dismiss it summarily. Whether one is caught up in political agitation, fascinated by the appearance of pattern and meaning in history, or desirous of being no more than a detached witness to endemic social change, "movement" is our fondest wish, our dream, a reason to continue living in human society, for it contains an affirmation of human significance. A consciousness is presumed by the concept "movement" which *requires* meaning, order and pattern in human experience even when these regularities must be manufactured. A theory of movement, therefore, must determine the identity and meaning of the consciousness which inspires us, as citizens and as scholars, to seek and see "movement" when we look at historical and social facts. Is it useful to think of the fact of change or the attempt to change as "movement"? What function does such a characterization have in the human mind? What relationship does consciousness of "movement" bear to human collective behavior? To what extent are such visions merely manipulative delusions? In my mind, these should be the primary and abiding questions of a theory of social movement.

A theory of movement answering such questions would represent a total reconceptualization of current procedures, a basic alteration of figure and ground relationships between "movements" and human communication. In nineteenth-century historicism, "movement" was not a phenomenon, but it was thought to be objective. So "movement" was ground or context, and human communication, when it was thought of at all, was considered to exist as a figure within the "movement." Similarly, those who accept the sociological proposition that "Movement is a phenomenon" see an objective thing, sometimes an organization or institution, sometimes a more gelatinous "situation" with objective "constraints" which allegedly imprison or circumscribe intentional communication.[29] In either case, the "rhetoric of social movements" is passive, reactive, a facilitator of change, subordinate to and determined by an objective phenomenon. When I envision an alternative theory of movement, however, I see "movement" existing as a figure or meaning within the ground/context of human communication. "Movement" is as meaning within a term, an organizing analogue of social facts which can be objectivated only in linguistic usage. Because it is the expression of those who need, seek and see "progress" or "destiny," the whole notion of "movement" is mythical, a trick-of-the-mind

ing: A Language-Action Synthesis," *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 12 (1979), 215-55.

[29] This is evident in Simons, "Reply to Zarefsky," p. 4: "I view my own approach as highly consonant with Bitzerian situational theory. I argue, in his terms, that a given *class* of situational exigences and constraints will impel and constrain movement rhetors in particular ways. For example, a militant movement organization will typically be more constrained by agents of social control then, say, an established philanthropic organization; and its rhetoric will thus differ as well." Simons' reference is to Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 1 (1968), 1-14. Bitzer's is a causal theory with the causes presupposed: Communication and its situation are *covariant* with each other, but they are *codeterminant* only with "exigence."

which must be understood *as an illusion* and not as a fact. I believe, therefore, that the appropriate models for our scientific study of "movement" are treatises in critical science. I mean to recommend the work of such as Habermas, Feuer, Gouldner, Eco, and Foucault on the problem of consciousness generally and the problem of ideology specifically. In my mind, these *are* the conceptually legitimate studies of "movement(s)."[30]

I agree in principle with Zarefsky and Sillars that rather than trying to create a theory about the use of communication in social movements, we probably are better off exploiting the uniqueness of our subject matter by making a rhetorical theory *of* movement.[31] That is, the impulse to see "movement" in certain changes and not in others is recorded in attempts to make such perception general through the rhetorical community. A survey of any nation's rhetoric should clearly indicate that normative descriptions for common phenomena have or have not changed. When people use new words—or obviously attribute new meaning to old words—we can assume that consciousness of their environment has "moved" by measure of the difference in descriptors themselves or in meanings. We will not say that "movement" exists or has occurred until we can demonstrate by a survey of public discourse that descriptors of the environment have changed *in common usage* in such a way as to make "movement" an arguably ac ceptable term useful in formulating the chain of facts we believe to have constituted a real change. The primary objective of a theorist working under such constraint is to *prove* rather than *presume* the existence of "movement(s)." I have argued elsewhere for one alternative in such proof: Because there is a basic vocabulary of normative terms in any social-political system, and because those terms exhibit both diachronic and synchronic structures, we can prove "movement" by observing changes in the "ideographic" structures of social norm-systems.[32] Since one can produce the rhetorical artifacts which document this evolution of meanings, technical use of the concept "movement" seems legitimate. The rhetorical artifacts which warrent claims of "movement" also give us a concrete object of study, for we can point to changes in patterns of discourse *directly,* in a way conceptually impossible if we conceive of "movement" as existing apart from consciousness and/or independent of the discourse which communicates consciousness.

Lucas has characterized the two orientations contrasted here as a reconcilable disagreement between "historical" and "sociological" conceptions of "movement." At first I was comfortable with this synthesis, I think, because I have more sympathy for the 19th-century historicist than for the 20th-century positivist. Upon reflection, however, I cannot agree that my approach is "historical;" rather, it is

[30] See, for example, Michele Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge,* trans. Alan M. Sheridan-Smith (1969; Eng. trans. rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1976); Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1976); Lewis Feuer, *Ideology and the Ideologists* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975); Alvin Gouldner, *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology* (New York: Seabury, 1976); Jurgen Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society,* trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon, 1975).

[31] See David Zarefsky, "On Distinctions without Differences: Do Social Movements Have a Unique Rhetorical Form?" Working Papers of the Seminar on Rhetoric and Social Movements, Speech Communication Association, San Antonio TX, November 1979; and Malcolm O. Sillars, "Defining Movements Rhetorically: Casting the Widest Net," *Southern Speech Communication Journal,* in press.

[32] See "The 'Ideograph': A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech,* 66 (1980), 1-16.

communicational or rhetorical and as far from last century's historicism as Herbert Simons is from Emile Durkheim. Further, I cannot agree that Simons and I are "looking at approximately the same phenomenon," for I see no phenomenon at all, but only a series of words with meanings to be discovered and verified. If it could be established that "social movement(s)" were *both* phenomena and a set of meanings, there would be a difference of perspective, with Simons opting to see the phenomenon "coming first" in an explanation of belief and attitude and I preferring to see a pattern of consciousness "coming first" in an explanation of episodes and behaviors. But until I see convincing arguments to the contrary, I continue to believe that "social movement" is not a phenomenon *as a matter of fact*. I cannot escape the conviction that there is an egregious mistake in sociological theory now being borrowed and perpetuated by communication theorists. "Social movement" ought not to be a *premise* with which we *begin* research, defining what we want to see and, lo and behold, finding it. Rather, "social movement" ought to be a *conclusion*, a carefully considered and well-argued inference that changes in human consciousness are of such a nature that "social movement" has occurred, or that the rhetorical activity of a group of human beings would produce "social movement" if it were effective. Theoretical descriptions of "social movement(s)," in other words, ought to make questions of consciousness "come first," focusing on the fact of collectivity and not on the accident of an allegedly pre-existing phenomenon. To believe otherwise, I think, is quite simply to embrace an unfortunately conventional error.

A SKEPTICAL VIEW OF MOVEMENT STUDIES

David Zarefsky

RHETORICAL scholars have approached the study of social movements from two distinct points of view. The first is *historical;* the scholar seeks to make claims about the movement's development and its relation to other events. The historically-oriented scholar takes the phrase, "the rhetoric of movements," to mean that movements exist as historical phenomena and that they employ rhetoric. Their rhetoric should be studied so that we will know more about the use of persuasion in efforts to mobilize for or to resist social change.

The second perspective for movement studies is *theoretical;* the scholar seeks to make generalizable claims about patterns of persuasion characteristic of movements as a class. To the theoretically-oriented scholar, the phrase, "the rhetoric of movements," marks out a distinct domain of rhetorical behavior. Movements are characterized by recurrent rhetorical patterns not found in other instances of persuasion. Otherwise, there would be no need to identify movements as a separate category. From this perspective, individual movements serve as case studies to test general propositions which not only explain persuasion in the past but also permit predictions about the future.

The argument of this essay is that theoretically-oriented studies of social movements, since they depend upon establishing the uniqueness of movement rhetoric, have not been very productive. By contrast, essentially historical studies are rich in potential value and ought to be pursued.

The Emergence of the Uniqueness Issue

When Griffin first recommended that rhetorical scholars examine movements,[1] he was responding to what were then the predominant modes of rhetorical criticism: biographies of individual orators and analyses of the effects of individual speeches. Griffin was convinced that great orators and orations, however significant, were not the whole stuff of which a history of public address should be formed. He thought instead that a comprehensive history of persuasion "might well be conceived in terms of movements rather than individuals."[2] As a result, he urged that rhetorical scholars round out the history of public address by investigating the role of persuasion in sustained efforts to bring about or to retard social change.

Griffin did not distinguish "movements" from "campaigns" or other instances of rhetorical behavior having cumulative effects over time. Indeed, since his immediate motive was to enrich the study of the history of public address, it was desirable that his definition of "movement" be quite broad. In that

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1 Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech,* 38 (1952), 184-88.

2 Griffin, p. 188.

way, studies of "a multiplicity of speakers, speeches, audiences, and occasions"[3] would be encouraged. In the past twenty-five years there have been numerous studies—of *pro* and *anti*-movements, insurgent and elitist movements, successful and unsuccessful movements, historical and contemporary movements. As the studies have accumulated, scholars began to ask what the rhetorical dimensions of these movements have in common and whether any features set them apart from other cases of persuasion. The profusion of studies makes the uniqueness issue salient. The issue, in short, is whether movements comprise a distinct rhetorical genre, either in the sense that they have a unique form or in the sense that they arise in a unique type of situation. If so, then the foundation can be laid for a rhetorical theory specific to movements. If not, then attempts to develop such a theory are likely to be unproductive. To settle the issue, one must examine theoretically-based studies of movements.

Theoretical Studies: Distinctiveness by Definition

One theoretical approach to movement studies is to *define* movements as different from other kinds of persuasion. This approach is well represented by the work of Cathcart.[4] Noting that most sociological theories of movements stress their status as uninstitutionalized collectives, Cathcart inquires whether unique rhetorical behavior is manifest in efforts to direct change occurring outside established institutional boundaries. He concludes that the "establishment" response to such efforts at social change is the key variable. If the "establishment" regards the protest as illegitimate and focuses on that issue, it creates what Cathcart calls a state of dialectical enjoinment. Accordingly, Cathcart *defines* movements as a rhetorical form featuring a dialectic between the established order and those who question its moral legitimacy.

The first question that must be asked about Cathcart's definition is: Does the dialectic which he describes occur only between "establishments" and "uninstitutionalized collectivities?" If the answer is no, then we cannot say that a movement has a unique rhetorical form. And the answer to this question *is* no, as a counter-example should demonstrate.

In my study of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty,[5] I found a series of collective efforts to obtain change which, far from being uninstitutionalized, were sponsored and financed by government. Yet the same dialectical pattern emerged. The "challenging *pro* movement" confronted the "power structure" and charged that it was illegitimate because it had sold out to political machines. Political leaders responded that it was wrong for the War on Poverty to use public funds to organize attacks on public officials and focused on that issue. *Both* sets of forces were supported by the political "establishment," yet the state of dialectical tension which Cathcart describes was present. This is not a unique example. The juvenile delinquency projects during the Kennedy Administration followed much the same pattern.[6] So do

[3] Griffin, p. 184.

[4] See Robert S. Cathcart, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," *Western Speech*, 36 (1972), 82-88; "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 43 (1978), 233-47; "Defining Social Movements Rhetorically: A Second Look," paper presented at the Eastern Communication Association convention, Philadelphia, May 1979.

[5] David Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establishment' Movements," *Communication Monographs*, 43 (1977), 352-73.

[6] See John E. Moore, "Controlling Delin-

self-help organizations funded through public or private philanthropy but which define their mission in opposition to the charity "establishment."[7] So too does any controversy in which government regulators decry excessive business profits as illegitimate or immoral, only to encounter the response that the government's intervention in the economy is itself inappropriate. A creative imagination, no doubt, easily could suggest other instances in which the dialectical enjoinment Cathcart describes can be found *within* the boundaries of established institutions.

It might be argued that instances such as these do not really illustrate dialectical enjoinment because there is a large fund of common beliefs which these groups share. By the very fact of their institutionalized status, they subscribe to the legitimacy and norms of the established order. They may draw on these norms for premises on which they would agree; this agreement, in turn, makes it possible for them to communicate directly with one another. They need not engage in what Cathcart calls an "agonistic ritual" to attract the attention of a wider public to their cause.

Such a rejoinder, however, is really beside the point. For the groups in practice appeal not to each other but to a broader public. Certainly they behave as if they were engaged in an agonistic ritual. If rhetorical behavior is taken at face value, then these efforts clearly satisfy Cathcart's standard for movements even though they do not come from uninstitutionalized collectives. Alternatively, if one looks "beneath the surface" and relies on external data to determine whether there "really" is dialectical enjoinment, one would be unlikely ever to find such a state. Only in a situation of actual revolution, if then, could one say that there is no common ground among participants in a controversy. Because of this dilemma, Cathcart's definition is either too narrow, permitting no case of true dialectical enjoinment, or too broad, including far more rhetorical behavior than is unique to uninstitutionalized collectives.

Cathcart's attempt at distinctiveness by definition might still be salvaged if the form which he calls "movement" is distinct from other patterns of persuasion. Hence, a second question must be posed: Whether in institutionalized or uninstitutionalized groups, is the form of "dialectical enjoinment" different from other rhetorical forms? An affirmative answer would identify essential distinguishing features; a negative answer would deny the essential differences between "movement" and some other rhetorical pattern.

Again the answer is negative. Cathcart's concept of "dialectical enjoinment" is essentially the same as *"stasis* in place."[8] This *stasis* develops when the heart of a controversy involves the appropriate forum, or place, to consider the dispute. The procedural *stasis* preempts the substantive ones; when the question of place is raised, the dispute must focus on that issue. Whether the courts or the legislature is the appropriate place to discuss sex discrimination takes precedence over whether it is a problem and what should be done about it. Likewise, deciding whether Congress or a constitutional convention should determine the Federal budget takes

quency: Executive, Congressional, and Juvenile, 1961-64." *Congress and Urban Problems*, ed. Frederic N. Cleaveland (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1968), pp. 110-72.

[7] I am indebted to David Droge who is examining epilepsy self-help groups in a dissertation in progress, Northwestern University.

[8] See S. Hultzén, "*Status* in Deliberative Analysis," *The Rhetorical Idiom*, ed. Donald C. Bryant (1958; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1966), pp. 97-123.

precedence over what the size of the budget should be. And a claim that appealing to the professor, not lodging a formal protest with the dean, is the appropriate way to redress an academic grievance pre-empts consideration of the merits of the grievance. When Cathcart maintains that the "control agents and general public perceive that the collective is acting outside the system and . . . choose to respond to this aspect rather than the grievance,"[9] he suggests that the "establishment" says in effect, "You do not have standing to discuss your grievances"—a charge which focuses subsequent discussion on the question of place.

Since *stasis* in place is preemptive, one might expect disputants to raise this issue if they think they can succeed without addressing the substantive questions. The behavior Cathcart sees as defining a movement may be undertaken as a strategy. Rhetors may define their adversaries (or themselves) as inside or outside institutional norms, not as a reflection of objective differences in ideology, but in order to serve the purpose of widening or narrowing the scope of conflict.[10] For this reason, recourse to *stasis* in place can be a universally available choice, regardless of the rhetorical situation. Of course, one could identify this haggling over place as "movement" if he or she wished, but there would be no gain. The term would be used in such a different way from its sociological roots as to invite confusion. It would not say anything new about the behavior being examined. And it would not establish "movements" as a rhetorical genre in a way that would facilitate what Simons calls "a social science of rhetorical choice, one that delimits strategic and stylistic options in the face of situational and purposive constraints."[11]

Beneath the two questions raised lurks a more fundamental one: Is the distinction between acting "inside" and "outside" the system valid?[12] In answering this question, we may be misled if we too quickly accept the self-reports of actors who describe themselves as a "movement" because they are outside the system. "Movement" is a "persuasive definition;"[13] it attaches to one's actions the connotations of motion, determinism, future-orientation, and sympathy for the underdog. As Jimmy Carter demonstrated in 1976, there may be strategic reasons for defining oneself as "outside the system." Those out of power may so define themselves in order to raise the stakes, enhance the drama of the situation, and impart a sense of destiny. Those in power may so characterize themselves to distinguish themselves from their predecessors, to imply that they cannot be co-opted, or to attract attention. Consequently, the distinction which rhetors make so easily will give the critic a very hard time. Confrontations provoked by militant foes of nuclear power, for instance, are as much a part of "the system" as are Congressional debates. Indeed, the essence of a democratic polity is that it is

9 Cartcart, "Second Look."

10 See E. E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), pp. 16-18.

11 Herbert W. Simons, "'Genre-alizing' about Rhetoric: A Scientific Approach," *Form and Genre: Shaping Rhetorical Action*, ed. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (Falls Church, Va.: Speech Communication Association, 1977), p. 33.

12 Cathcart appears to use the terms "establishment," "system," and "established agencies of change" interchangeably. In his 1978 essay, he distinguishes between "rhetorical acts which by their form uphold and reenforce the established order or system and those which reject the system, its hierarchy and its values." Cathcart, "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," p. 237.

13 The term, "persuasive definition," is taken from Charles L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), pp. 206-26.

open to a multiplicity of speakers and modes of advocacy. The only actors who might truly fall "outside" the system are those who renounce advocacy in favor of terrorism or revolution—and Cathcart's definition does not necessarily distinguish even these acts from agonistic ritual.

For the previously developed reasons, Cathcart's definition fails to establish the distinctiveness of "movements" as a rhetorical form.[14] If movements are not unique, then there is no basis for constructing a rhetorical theory specific to them. Propositions which describe or explain social movements might easily apply to other rhetorical behavior as well.

Theoretical Studies: Distinctiveness by Situation

A second group of scholars also have argued that movements have distinct rhetorical features although the reasoning is quite different from Cathcart's. Rather than *defining* movements as a rhetorical form, they accept the definitions offered by sociologists. Various usages may be found, but the term *movement* generally is taken to designate collective action conducted outside the framework of established institutions to achieve major social change.[15] Behavior which satisfies these criteria is distinguished from that which does not. As the sociologist finds that movements differ from other organizations in structure and function, so rhetorical scholars adopting this approach believe that movements differ in the type of rhetorical situation to which they must respond. A distinctive constellation of rhetorical problems confronts a movement and requires a distinctive pattern of response.

This position is well represented by the work of Herbert W. Simons, who argues that social movements face unique rhetorical requirements, confront unique rhetorical problems, and must generate unique rhetorical strategies.[16] Since the requirements and problems define the situation and produce the strategic response, the test of Simons' argument is twofold: (1) Do the requirements and problems he identifies as unique to social movements also characterize other forms of persuasion? (2) If so, do they generate unique strategic choices? If the first question is answered affirmatively or the second question negatively, Simons' position would seem flawed—in the first case because there would be no difference in situation and in the second case because the situational difference would not constrain strategic choice.

On what grounds might situations be argued to be unique? From Simons' more recent writing, two distinguishing features can be inferred. First, unlike campaigns, movements are not presumed

[14] For criticisms of Cathcart on other grounds, see Charles A. Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (1976), 90; Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 142. Dan F. Hahn and Ruth M. Gonchar, "Social Movement Theory: A Dead End," *Communication Quarterly*, 28 (1980), 60-64.

[15] For typical definitions of "social movement," see Joseph R. Gusfield, ed., *Protest, Reform, and Revolt: A Reader in Social Movements* (New York: Wiley, 1970), p. 2; Barry McLaughlin, *Studies in Social Movements* (New York: Free Press, 1969), p. 4; Herbert Blumer, "Elementary Collective Behavior," in *New Outline of the Principles of Sociology*, ed. Alfred McClung Lee (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1949), p. 199; Neil J. Smelser, *Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1962), pp. 110, 129-30; Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian, *Collective Behavior* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1957), p. 308. It is possible to overstate this consensus. For example, Ash characterizes the American Revolution and New Deal as social movements and suggests that the most successful movements are organized by elites. See Roberta Asch, *Social Movements in America*, (Chicago: Markham, 1972).

[16] "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 1-11.

to be legitimate. Hence, they must struggle for access to the means of communication. Second, movements have fewer means to reward and punish their followers; consequently, they have a more difficult task of maintaining internal control. Both of these claims, however, seem to be based on stereotypes and do not apply uniquely to movements.

Whether one has legitimacy and effective access to communication media depends more on the rhetorical situation than on one's membership in a sociological category. The recent experience of President Jimmy Carter provides an instructive example. During the summer of 1979 (well before Iran and Afghanistan), the President found himself in an anomalous situation: his standing in public opinion polls had fallen so low that his leadership was not taken seriously. As a result, he had difficulty alerting the American public to the problems inherent in continued reliance on imported oil. Although he could hold press conferences or deliver major addresses, he could not induce his audience to pay attention to his message. It was necessary for him to stage spectacles to attract attention: first, the dramatic cancellation of a scheduled address, then the retreat to Camp David, and finally, the sojourn on the *Delta Queen*. The rhetorical requirement was the need to be taken seriously; the problem was that the President's credibility was in doubt, and his strategy apparently was the staging of a spectacle.

To be sure, an insurgent protest group cannot go to Camp David; nor can its leaders attract publicity by taking a riverboat cruise. But they too can stage spectacles—by holding protest marches, by disrupting traffic, or by "sitting in" at a public building. Simons would seem compelled to assume that the two situations are markedly different. But are they really? The requirements and problems are the same. The persuader's objective depends on the support of a wider audience, one that must be created through publicity, and yet effective publicity cannot be assured because the persuader's credibility is in question. The strategy is the same—to stage a spectacle to gain attention which can be exploited for one's cause. The difference is one of *tactics*.[17] On the basis of this example, then, it seems that the first alleged difference between movements and other rhetorical ventures would need to be attenuated: movements select different tactics in executing the same strategies which respond to the same requirements and problems that face other persuaders. And even this limited version of the hypothesis needs to be tested rather than assumed. After all, any persuader will employ a potentially large repertoire of tactics, so that one's behavior does not become too predictable. And it may well be, for example, that the President's cancellation of the speech and the insurgents postponement of a scheduled march are both examples of a more general tactic which is shared by both insurgent and elite rhetors. Until this alternative formulation is carefully explored, the first alleged difference between movements and other rhetorical behavior is difficult to accept.

As for the second point, that movements have fewer means to reward or punish their participants, that too seems to depend on the situation. A political administration with low ratings in the

[17] In one sense, the rhetorical problems facing the President and the protesters seem quite different. After all, Carter did not need to obtain access to the media, whereas acquiring access is one problem confronting a movement. Upon closer analysis, however, this difference seems illusory. *Effective* access is the key. If the President appears on television and the public does not listen or take him seriously, he is no better off than are protesters who do not receive television coverage in the first place.

polls will have a difficult time enforcing its will upon Congress, the bureaucracy, or the citizenry at large. A long-term campaign, such as the effort to rebuild major cities for the 21st century, will encounter difficulty sustaining support of people who will not themselves benefit from achievement of the goal. Gamson maintains that this problem is faced by philanthropic organizations as well as social movements, since "support cannot be explained by personal interest."[18]

On the other hand, to say that a social movement has few means of reward or punishment is to ignore the fact that social movements usually are composed of *organizations,* which by virtue of the levels of status and hierarchy implicit in formal structure have means of control. Moreover, if a social movement stands in opposition to a weak "establishment," its means of control may be derived from its own perceived legitimacy. In short, both movements and "establishments" may be in a strong or weak position. The nature of the situation, rather than their institutionalized or noninstitutionalized status, will determine their means of social control. Neither of the generalizations inferred from Simons' writing supports the claim that social movements confront unique rhetorical requirements or problems, or employ unique strategies.

In short, Simons' argument that social movements face unique rhetorical situations seems deficient. Through counterexamples, I have tried to suggest that other collectives face similar rhetorical requirements and problems, and generate similar strategies. One might respond that, despite individual cases of similarity, the *constellation* of problems facing movements poses unique rhetorical demands. This argument, in fact, seems to embody Simons' position. But the reply begs the question. It may be true that movements face a unique constellation of *problems,* but it does not follow that the constellation poses unique *rhetorical demands* or generates unique *rhetorical strategies.* The case of the Johnson Administration's War on Poverty may help to clarify this point.[19] The War on Poverty did not satisfy the sociological definition of a social movement, yet it displayed a similar rhetorical pattern. In responding to this argument, Simons, Mechling, and Schreier identify a number of differences between the War on Poverty and insurgent movements: governments have more material resources, insurgents must mobilize largely by ideological appeals, insurgents encounter different types of resistance, and protest depends on publicity.[20] But unless these differences produce in the social movement a distinct pattern of rhetorical behavior, there seems to be no insight gained by identifying the situation as unique. And it is questionable whether any distinct rhetorical pattern results. Greater material resources will not necessarily give a government legitimacy in a specific rhetorical situation. Nearly any large-scale campaign will employ ideological appeals; even the President of the United States felt compelled to dramatize the energy issue and to portray it as a "crisis of confidence." While types of resistance may vary from one group to another, the resulting rhetorical situation may well be the same. The statement that protest requires publicity is

[18] William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey, 1975), p. 61.

[19] Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty."

[20] Herbert W. Simons, Elizabeth Mechling, and Howard N. Schreier, "Functions of Communication in Mobilizing for Collective Action from the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory,* ed. Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers (Boston: Allyn and Bacon), in press.

true regardless of the protest's source. In general, the fact that Simons and his colleagues note these differences, yet fail to show that they produce a unique rhetorical pattern, represents *support* for the position I have advanced.

To summarize, even if social movements differ from other collectives in the problem they face, this difference does not appear to represent a rhetorical constraint. The rhetorical choices of movement rhetors appear quite similar to those of advocates in seemingly quite dissimilar situations. Without a significant difference in constraints or choices, theorists have a shaky basis for regarding "movement" as a rhetorically significant construct about which unique propositions can be offered and tested.

The Proper Role of Movement Studies

I have argued that extant theory of "the rhetoric of social movements" fails to establish satisfactorily that there is such a thing. However much the sociologist might gain from distinguishing between movements and campaigns, it is not clear that there are inherently significant rhetorical differences. And, if not, then "the rhetoric of social movements" does not constitute a distinct theoretical domain.

What implications result from such a conclusion? It does not follow that students of movement rhetoric have wasted their time. Indeed, if the insights derived from the study of movements are applicable to persuasive campaigns generally, they may have accomplished more than they realize. It is noteworthy, for instance, that the stages and features which Griffin observed in social movements can be found in persuasive ventures ranging from public policy analysis to psychotherapy.[21] If movement scholars actually have contributed to theories of collective rhetorical behavior generally, then rather than bemoan the loss of "social movements" as a distinct category, we should rejoice at the gain.

Instead of abandoning the study of movements, then, we need to be clearer about what sorts of knowledge claims our study will produce. The primary benefits of movement studies are not theoretical but historical. The historical scholar of social movement rhetoric takes, as given, instances of collective behavior which the sociologist labels a "movement" and then examines their rhetorical dimensions. When Griffin advised studying the rhetorical component within a historical movement, he recognized that history has many dimensions. Like any other phenomenon, a historical movement can be studied from different points of view; the rhetorical historian complements the efforts of other scholars who examine the political dimensions, or the economic, or the cultural.

The movement study, then, is fundamentally a contribution to history. And significant contributions certainly have been made. For example, Griffin's own studies of the Antimasonic movement of the 1830's and the "New Left" of the 1960's have provided valuable insight into the dynamics of those social forces.[22] Andrews' study of the Chartist movement in England facilitates understanding of the turbulence surrounding early 19th-century proposals for re-

[21] See James A. Jones, "Federal Efforts to Solve Contemporary Social Problems," *Handbook on the Study of Social Problems*, ed. Erwin O. Smigel (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1971), p. 560; Jerome D. Frank, *Persuasion and Healing*, rev. ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973), pp. 85-105.

[22] Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetorical Structure of the Antimasonic Movement," *The Rhetorical Idiom*, ed. Donald C. Bryant (1958; rpt. New York: Russell and Russell, 1966), pp. 145-59; "The Rhetorical Structure of the 'New Left' Movement: Part I," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 50 (1964), 113-35.

form.[23] And Lucas' recent study of pre-Revolutionary rhetoric in Philadelphia helps one to explain the development of a revolutionary mentality in America during the years preceding independence.[24] These examples are hardly exhaustive.

Without denigrating the theoretical insight offered by any of these studies, it seems safe to say that they reveal more about the events examined than they do about movement rhetoric in general. Distinguishing movements from other species of rhetoric was not their purpose, nor was theory construction their primary objective. Like most historical studies, they presuppose theories of history and of rhetoric. They also yield hypotheses, axioms, and some of the data from which more general theories may be built. But the reason to study the movement's rhetoric is not that a distinct class of rhetoric thereby will be identified. Instead, the reason is that the movement either had or failed to have historical significance, and that our understanding of history will be enhanced by attention to its rhetorical dimension. Such a gain in understanding, after all, is the benefit which the rhetorical historian seems best equipped to provide.

In addition to the historical role of movement studies, "movement" itself may be a useful notion as a metaphor. Rhetorical behavior of various kinds might be studied productively by examining it through the perspective which this metaphor provides. In this way, we may be able to see the acts in a different light and thereby enhance our critical understanding and appreciation. Examining the War on Poverty as a movement, for example, may illumine an otherwise hidden aspect of its nature. In like manner, Griffin describes a study in progress which uses the notion of "movement" to interpret the assassination of President Kennedy.[25] And Simons, Chesebro, and Orr analyzed the 1972 Presidential campaign from the "movement" perspective.[26] Such studies indicate that "movement" may be heuristically useful as a metaphor even if indistinct as a theoretical construct.

Finally, the difficulties surrounding the notion of "movement" as a distinct rhetorical form may prompt us to re-examine other classifications of rhetorical acts. Our usual practice has been to differentiate by subject area: political campaigns, advertising, religious conversions, legal argument, and the like.[27] Sometimes we have distinguished on the basis of the objectives sought so that we have a rhetoric of innovation, of preservation, of reform, of revolution, and of restoration. Sometimes we have distinguished according to whether or not the campaign is an insurgent effort. What is true of movement studies may be true of other types as well: that we have created constructs and rhetorical categories prematurely, and on an *a priori* basis rather than as the outgrowth of historical research. The merit of a skeptical view of "movement studies" should be to alert us to just

[23] James R. Andrews, "The Passionate Negation: The Chartist Movement in Rhetorical Perspective," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 196-208.

[24] Stephen E. Lucas, *Portents of Rebellion: Rhetoric and Revolution in Philadelphia, 1765-76* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976).

[25] Leland M. Griffin, "Encounter at Dallas: Imaginary Movements and the Rhetoric of Assassination," position paper for the Speech Communication Association Seminar on Movements, San Antonio, November 1979.

[26] Herbert W. Simons, James W. Chesebro, and C. Jack Orr, "A Movement Perspective on the 1972 Presidential Campaign," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 168-79.

[27] See the chapters on persuasion in the family, in marketing, in bargaining and negotiation, in legal trials, and in political campaigns in Michael E. Roloff and Gerald R. Miller, ed., *Persuasion: New Directions in Theory and Research* (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1980).

this danger. Instead of imprisoning ourselves in our own assumptions and arbitrarily limiting the force of our generalizations, we will ask whether the distinctiveness of a situational type has been established. We will insist that uniqueness be shown by reference to cases, troublesome cases as well as obvious ones. And we thereby will enable critics to contribute more productively to the development of potent theories of rhetorical practice. Reflection on current trends in movement studies should suggest possibilities as well as pitfalls.

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COMING TO TERMS WITH MOVEMENT STUDIES

Stephen E. Lucas

WE have reached the end of the first generation of movement studies by rhetorical scholars. Although few such studies existed prior to 1965, better than two hundred have been published in the past fifteen years.[1] Yet our understanding of the rhetoric of social movements remains essentially epiphanic. Despite the insights, provocative ideas, and heuristic values of many individual books and essays, we have yet to develop much systematic research or theory-building about how rhetoric functions in the inception, progress, and culmination of social movements. Moreover, we have become increasingly bogged down in debate over focus and terminology. To review and assess this debate is one cardinal aim of this essay. The other is to recommend priorities for scholarship in the rhetoric of social movements.

I

Almost any study of rhetorical communication is concerned with movement in the broadest and most literal sense of the term—especially studies that deal with more than a single discourse: biographical studies engage the movement of thought, action, and expression in the career of one man or woman; period studies treat the movement of ideas and attitudes as revealed in and shaped by the public rhetoric circulated in society during a finite span of time; stylistic analyses of the evolution and significance of archetypal figures take up the movement of particular modes of expression over time; genre studies that seek to chart the development of forms of public address attend to the movement of recognizable patterns of discourse across time. Situational studies also deal with movement, for rhetorical situations are dynamic configurations of thought and action that are constantly in motion as they come into being, evolve, mature, pass out of being, and give rise to other situations. Even formalistic studies of individual rhetorical texts must give heed to movement because rhetorical discourses are not inert entities that are perceived whole by audiences, but are temporally emergent symbolic acts that unfold sequentially through time.

Yet we do not consider all such analyses to be movement studies.[2] The phrase "movement studies" has customarily been used by rhetoricians to designate investigations of the persuasive efforts of a fairly large number of people working together to alter or supplant some portion of the existing culture or social order, usually by noninstitu-

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[1] These are reviewed by Herbert Simons, Elizabeth Mechling, and Howard Schreier, "Functions of Communication in Mobilizing for Collective Action from the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory*, eds. Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers (Boston: Allyn and Bacon), in press. All quotations from this essay are from the pre-publication manuscript.

[2] For a contrary view see Malcolm Sillars, "Defining Movements Rhetorically: Casting the Wildest Net," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 46 (1980), 17-32.

tionalized means.[3] In the past few years, however, this approach—derived principally from sociological concepts and orientations—has been criticized by rhetoricians seeking alternatives.

One particularly arresting critique comes from Michael C. McGee, who disdains almost every current construction of the concept of movement. "Empirical sociologists, social psychologists, and most contemporary rhetoricians," he charges, "seem to be studying 'movement' only by a stretch of the imagination." In his essay "In Search of 'The People': A Rhetorical Alternative," he asserts that "movement" ought to be thought of in its "traditional" sense, as "the *historical* movement of ideas" over time. In this volume, McGee disavows his previous notion of "historical movement" in favor of "a hermeneutic theory of movement." "Social movement," he contends, "is a set of meanings and not a phenomenon." In his view, "the whole notion of 'movement' is mythical, a trick-of-the-mind which must be understood *as an illusion* and not as a fact." A defensible theory of "movement" should therefore be constructed "as a theory of meaning, not as a theory of phenomena, an account of human consciousness, not an account of human organizational behavior." Rather than trying to create "a theory about the use of communication *in* social movements," he says, we would be better off "exploiting the uniqueness of our subject matter by making a rhetorical theory *of* movement."[4]

McGee's central concern is not the rhetoric of *individual* social movements, but rhetoric as a factor in the *general process* of social movement (change). He directs attention to the role of rhetoric in the long-term development of social identities, cultural meanings, political norms, and the like. This is a valuable orientation, for it recognizes that public communication is a puissant force in the creation, fortification, and decay of those basic, enduring ideas and values that LeBon called "the generalized beliefs" constituting "the real framework of civilization."[5]

The usefulness of McGee's orientation, however, should not camouflage the serious flaws in his critique of social movement theory. For one thing, that critique is based largely on a series of straw men, the most important of which is the proposition, "movement is a phenomenon." McGee attributes this proposition to American empirical sociologists and to various rhetorical theorists who have drawn from their work. But the attribution is at best oversimplified. Although many sociologists and rhetoricians do believe that "movement is a phenomenon," they also believe that it is a particular kind of phenomenon—one closely related to what McGee calls "consciousness." It is a mistake to imply that the vast majority of contemporary scholars claim that social movements exist "apart from consciousness and independent of the discourse which communicates that consciousness."[6] Virtually all rhetoricians

[3] This definition of "social movements" is an amalgam of those offered by Wm. Bruce Cameron, *Modern Social Movements* (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 7, and John Wilson, *Introduction to Social Movements* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 8.

[4] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 235n; "'Social Movement': Phenomenon or Meaning?" *Central States Speech Journal* (this issue), 1, 15-17 [from original ms.].

[5] Gustave LeBon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (1895; rpt. New York: Viking, 1960), p. 142. My characterization of McGee's overriding interest in the general process of social movement/change is based not only upon his essay for this volume, but also upon other of his writings, especially "The 'Ideograph': A Link between Rhetoric and Ideology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66 (1980), 1-16; "The Origins of 'Liberty': A Feminization of Power," *Communication Monographs*, 47 (1980), 23-45; and "In Search of 'The People.'"

[6] McGee, "'Social Movement'," p. 18 [from ms.].

and most sociologists who deal with the subject appear to recognize that explicating a social movement requires, among other things, an account of the perceptions, opinions, beliefs, attitudes, and values—of the "consciousness"—of people involved with the movement.[7]

Not only is the general proposition "movement is a phenomenon" a straw man, so too are various of the positions McGee associates with it. Take, for example, his claim that "the argument 'Movement is a phenomenon' works only by affirming the consequent." In the course of supporting this claim, McGee states:

> By agreeing that an organization calling itself "Hitler Youth Movement" *in fact* is an empirical specification of the concept "movement," theorists would be granting an aura of factual legitimacy to a patently rhetorical ploy. Put in logical form, we would be saying "If social movements existed empirically, surely people in fact would organize themselves into groups they call 'movements.' Since people have organized themselves into groups they call 'movements,' then social movement exists empirically and can be studied objectively." That tactic . . . affirms a consequent.

So it may. But McGee does not demonstrate that there is a substantial group of sociologists or rhetoricians who actually adopt the tactic.[8] Indeed, the tactic is so preposterous that it is difficult to imagine serious scholars employing it.

The same is true of McGee's claim that it is a mistake for theorists to insist, by fiat of definition, that a group of people angrily parading in front of a factory can be classified as "'social movement' and nothing else."[9] Such insistence is doubtless mistaken. But so is McGee's implication that it is typical of prevailing sociological and rhetorical approaches to social movements. McGee does not cite any theorists who actually adopt the position he criticizes. Nor can I think of any who do. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine any student of social movements classifying a single incident such as a group of people parading in front of a factory as a social movement at all, much less claiming that such an incident could not be classified as anything but a social movement. McGee is again refuting a straw man that holds no discernible resemblance to the positions actually espoused by the people he indicts.

A second major flaw in McGee's critique is that, to a large extent, it is not specific to movement theory but could be leveled at almost any concept expressed in ordinary language. McGee's essay is informed throughout by the observation that words and their referents are not identical, that "the objective, empirical phenomenon" remains the same "despite my choice of one term or another to characterize and conceptualize it." With this truism there can be no quarrel. Nor can there be great quarrel with the claim that "however closely we define a particular 'movement,' the existence of the term in ordinary language increases the probability that it is an *a priori* label pressed from the mind either of the theorist or of the political activist onto

[7] This point receives fuller treatment later in my essay.

[8] McGee, "'Social Movement'," pp. 13-14 [from ms.]. To be sure, McGee claims that the tactic is "characteristically employed by such lights of American empirical sociology as Smelser and Bell," but he does not actually quote either as saying anything that closely resembles the hypothetical statement he condemns as affirming a consequent. Nor can I find any such statement in the works by Bell and Smelser cited by McGee in footnote 25. Moreover, I cannot find in the pages of Dolbeare and Dolbeare's *American Ideologies* cited by McGee an indictment of Bell that corresponds with McGee's. Indeed, Bell is not mentioned by name anywhere in those pages, except on page 20, as a bibliographical entry. To make such a serious indictment of Smelser, Bell, and, by implication, other leading students of social movements requires something more concrete than a hypothetical scenario.

[9] McGee, "'Social Movement'," p. 6 [from ms.].

the social events witnessed." But neither of these statements makes a special indictment of the utility of "social movement" as a descriptive label or theoretical construct, or of the proposition that "movement is a phenomenon." When examined closely, much of McGee's critique of social movement theory reduces to the commonplace observation that the term *movement* "is an interpretation of phenomenal data controlled less by what happens in the real world than by what a particular user of the analogue wants to see in the real world."[10]

In addition, the central question of McGee's essay presupposes a false dichotomy between phenomena and meaning, between objective conditions and subjective reality. Subjective reality does not exist independently of social forces, events, and institutions, but is intricately interconnected with them, both influencing their nature, direction, and impress, and in turn being influenced by them. Social movements are both phenomena and meaning. They exist in the phenomenal world, but they are phenomena about which we form perceptions, interpretations, and judgments.[11] They are in this respect no different from most other phenomena. To ask whether social movements are "phenomena or meaning" is a misleading question that ignores the complex and symbiotic relationship between the world "out there" and the ways we perceive that world and invest it with order, meaning, and evaluative shadings.[12]

Finally, it should be noted that McGee intermixes two different constructions of the term "movement" throughout his essay. At times, he uses "movement" in the broad sense—to refer to large social trends, drifts, or currents. In this usage, "social movement" might be read as meaning something akin to "social change." At other times, he uses "movement" to refer to particular social movements. Both usages are legitimate. The problem is that McGee does not distinguish clearly between them and, at times, appears to use them interchangeably. He does not take account of the fact that although the general process of movement/change in society and the operations of specific social movements are doubtless related, they are not identical. The former is a transcendent process of which the latter may compose one facet. Moreover, when McGee does use "movement" discretely, it is, as often as not, to refer to social movement/change in general. But this is not the way the term has been used

[10] Ibid., pp. 6, 12, 7 [from ms.]. A further caveat might be entered here. McGee implies that ordinary language cannot be used precisely and that the term "movement" is invariably used sloppily and inexactly. Neither implication is correct. Indeed, much of the energy of contemporary scholarship is devoted to using ordinary language in increasingly precise ways, and not without success. Moreover, contrary to McGee's suggestion, the term "movement" is not always "the expression of those who need, seek and see 'progress' or 'destiny'" (p. 17) [from ms.]. It is used impartially by scholars to designate a certain type of collective behavior. McGee need not agree with that usage, but he errs in attributing the motivations of interested political agents to everyone who uses the term "movement."

[11] And, of course, part of that process of perception, interpretation, and judgment includes the very act of deciding which phenomena are properly to be labeled "social movements."

[12] Early in his essay, McGee appears to recognize the problems of divorcing objective phenomena from meaning. By the end, however, he appears to revert to a hard-and-fast distinction between social movements as phenomena and as meanings attached to phenomena. This is most evident in his statement that, as far as social movements are concerned, he sees "no phenomenon at all, only a series of words with meanings to be discovered and verified" (p. 19) [from ms.]. In so stating, McGee also intimates that discourse itself does not exist as an objective phenomenon. But this is a very curious position indeed. Would it not be preferable to say that rhetorical documents exist as objective phenomena, but that the meanings attached to those documents are matters of social construction?

in prevailing scholarship about social movements. In short, much of McGee's analysis of "movement theory" is concerned, not with particular social movements, but with the broad process of movement/change in society. As a result, it does not meet head-on the concepts and issues which have been at the center of either rhetorical or sociological scholarship about social movements.

The problems of McGee's critique notwithstanding, there is considerable attraction in his call for a rhetorical theory of movement. But even should such a theory be developed, there is no reason why McGee's approach need supplant either existing terminology about collective behavior or continued study of the rhetoric of social movements—especially since the rhetoric of social movements is often a potent force in the general process of social movement/change.

The call for a rhetorical theory of movement has much in common with the concept of "rhetorical movement." Efforts to formulate such a concept may be traced back most clearly to Robert Cathcart's essay "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically."[13] Cathcart assailed existing historical and socio-psychological definitions of movement as "*ill-suited* to the formulation of an adequate theory of the rhetoric of movements" because they do not realize that "movements are essentially rhetorical in nature." What was needed, he said, was a rhetorical definition of movements that "could make us masters of our own house rather than slaves to the historians and social scientists." Borrowing heavily from Leland M. Griffin's 1969 "Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements,"[14] Cathcart identified "*dialectical enjoinment in the moral arena*" as "the *necessary ingredient* which produces the rhetorical form that we have come to recognize as a political or social movement." Unfortunately, Cathcart's examination of the regnant definitions of social movements was cursory. Nor did he seek to develop more than the beginning of an alternative definition.

Charles Wilkinson later refined and extended Cathcart's partial definition to provide a more fully developed conception of rhetorical movement. Like Cathcart, Wilkinson affirmed that "all movements are essentially rhetorical," and his thinking likewise relied heavily upon the premises and vocabulary of Burkeian dramatism. He defined rhetorical movements as "*languaging strategies by which a significantly vocal part of an established society, experiencing together a sustained dialectical tension growing out of moral (ethical) conflict, agitate to induce cooperation in others, either directly or indirectly, thereby affecting the status quo.*" One virtue of this definition, Wilkinson claimed, was that it demarcated the rhetorician's object of study, "thus setting him apart from either or both historian and sociologist."[15]

Although Cathcart and Wilkinson have advanced the major attempts formally to define "rhetorical movement," the phrase has been widely used, albeit most often casually, cryptically, and inexactly. In her essay on the rhetoric of women's liberation, for example, Campbell rejects out of hand historical and socio-psychological definitions of movements as the basis for rhetorical criti-

[13] *Western Speech*, 36 (1972), 82-88. Also see Cathcart's "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 43 (1978), 233-47, as well as his essay in this issue.

[14] In *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke*, ed. William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), pp. 456-78.

[15] Charles Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (1976), 88-94.

cism. "The criteria defining a rhetorical movement," she holds, "must be rhetorical." But what she means by "rhetorical movement" is not clear. At one point she appears to use the term to refer to the rhetoric of a social movement; at another she seems to think of it as "a persuasive campaign"; at yet another she all but equates it with "genre."[16] Bormann also finds the notion of rhetorical movement attractive, although his use of it is couched in the peculiar language of fantasy theme analysis. "A rhetorical movement," he states, "contains small group fantasy chains, public fantasy events, and a rhetorical vision in a complex and reciprocal set of relationships." One result of propagating a rhetorical vision is the emergence of "a rhetorical movement." What that might be, however, Bormann does not explain.[17] In his essay on the rhetoric surrounding the war on poverty program, Zarefsky points out serious problems in previous definitions of "rhetorical movement" and calls for "a definition which identifies the rhetorical situations to be called movements." Although Zarefsky does not provide such a definition, he does suggest that "rhetorical movements" may best be thought of as synonymous with "persuasive campaigns" in general.[18]

Obviously, if the concept "rhetorical movement" is to acquire utility for either theory or research, it must receive more thorough and systematic explication. At present, it offers no evident advantages over the more sharply defined "social movement." Equally important, the premise underlying the notion of "rhetorical movement"—that movements are essentially rhetorical in nature—has yet to be demonstrated, or even adequately elucidated, although it has been asserted so repeatedly and so insistently that one would think it had been. It will not do to adduce *a priori* premises about the nature of man as a symbol-using animal or about the general importance of rhetoric in society and then to move blithely from those premises to the conclusion that social movements in particular are essentially rhetorical in nature. The claim that social movements are essentially rhetorical is an empirical claim that requires empirical confirmation.[19] Nor will it do to say that "movements as he [the rhetorical analyst] studies them are in their *essence* rhetorical,"[20] for such statements are really about the scholarly interests of rhetoricians and not about the nature of social movements. After all, movements are doubtless essentially historical for the historian and essentially social for the sociologist.[21]

But even if the claim that movements are essentially rhetorical in nature were adequately enucleated and authoritatively established, it would not necessarily follow that "social movements" should be discarded in favor of "rhetorical movements"—especially since, as Zarefsky has suggested, the latter may most

[16] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 74-86.

[17] Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 399.

[18] David Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establishment' Movements," *Communication Monographs*, 44 (1977), 371-72.

[19] It should be noted that my aim here is not to deny that social movements are essentially rhetorical (they may be), but to stress that the claim cannot be accepted until it is demonstrated and not simply asserted.

[20] Zarefsky, p. 371.

[21] Wilkinson recognizes this much, but his efforts to answer the question, "What is the essence of movements *qua* movement?" are overly facile and partly circular. Note, for example, his claim that "because of the nature of man, of language, and of movements themselves, all movements are essentially rhetorical, having historical, sociological, and other components defined according to the accidents of time, place, and circumstance" ("Rhetorical Definition," p. 92).

profitably be seen as a larger category of which social movements compose only one subset.[22]

Advocates of "rhetorical movement" have too hastily discounted the utility for rhetorical scholarship of sociological orientations to social movements. Although sociologists "generally feel more comfortable studying social structure and behavior than studying symbols and belief systems,"[23] there is little in current sociological thinking that is inherently hostile to studying movements from a rhetorical perspective. Indeed, there is much to encourage such study. For one thing, some sociologists have dealt insightfully with matters germane to the rhetoric of social movements, including rumor as an element in collective behavior, the determinants of social movement strategies, the influence of countermovement activities upon movement development, channels of communication as a factor in the growth and maintenance of social movements, the public perception of protest, how movements "manage" the available "resources" to realize their objectives, the ways movement leaders use verbal and nonverbal symbols to define and sell their ideology and to stimulate followers to action.[24]

More important, many sociologists now appear to agree that the ultimate success of social movements depends upon their ability to challenge persuasively prevailing thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and values. The *outcome* of a successful social movement is usually alteration in some area of established social relations, Herbert Blumer explains, but the essential *process* of a movement is one "in which attention has to be gained, interests awakened, grievances exploited, ideas implanted, doubts dispelled, feelings aroused, new objects created, and new perspectives developed."[25] To say that a social movement has taken place is to say that there have occurred changes of some magnitude in the "feelings, resentments, worries, fears, concerns, and hopes of large numbers of people."[26] Discontent, many sociologists now recognize, is a psychological phenomenon. In the words of John Wilson, "the origins of social unrest cannot be fully described until the meaning which actors themselves attach to the situation has been discovered."[27] "Collective behavior is not only collective action," Turner and Killian state, "it is also collaboration in creating an accepted version of reality."[28] It is today

22 Zarefsky, p. 372.

23 Gary T. Marx and James L. Wood, "Strands of Theory and Research in Collective Behavior," in *Annual Review of Sociology*, ed. Alex Inkeles, James Coleman, and Neil Smelser (Palo Alto: Annual Review, Inc., 1975), p. 382.

24 See, for example, Gordon W. Allport and Leo Postman, *The Psychology of Rumor* (New York: Henry Holt, 1947); Ralph H. Turner, "Determinants of Social Movement Strategies," in *Human Nature and Collective Behavior: Papers in Honor of Herbert Blumer*, ed. Tomatsu Shibutani (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970), pp. 145-64; Neil J. Smelser, *Theory of Collective Behavior* (New York: Free Press, 1963); Ralph H. Turner, "The Public Perception of Protest," *American Sociological Review*, 34 (1969), 815-31; Anthony Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973); William A. Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood: Dorsey, 1975); Hugh Dalziel Duncan, *Communication and Social Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968); Clifford Geertz, "Ideology as a Cultural System," in *Ideology and Discontent*, ed. David E. Apter (Glencoe: Free Press, 1964), pp. 47-76; Leo Lowenthal and Norbert Guterman, *Prophets of Deceit: A Study of the Techniques of the American Agitator* (New York: Harper and Row, 1949). For detailed reviews of the sociological literature on social movements consult Marx and Wood, "Strands of Theory and Research"; Stanley Milgram and Hans Toch, "Collective Behavior: Crowds and Social Movements," in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, 2nd ed., ed. Gardner Lindzey and Elliott Aronson (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1968-69), IV, 507-610.

25 "Collective Behavior," in *Review of Sociology: Analysis of a Decade*, ed. Joseph B. Gittler (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1957), p. 148.

26 Milgram and Toch, "Collective Behavior," p. 585.

27 Wilson, p. 68.

28 Ralph H. Turner and Lewis M. Killian,

a basic tenet among sociologists that social movements are energized by a powerful set of beliefs regarding what is wrong with things as they are and what should be done about them. It is widely acknowledged that to study the rise and progress of social movements is, among other things, to study the processes through which beliefs are generated, articulated, promulgated, and come to be accepted (or rejected) by groups in society.

Social movements are complex phenomena that invite interrogation from a number of perspectives. Sociological and rhetorical perspectives are best seen as complementary. To date, students of communication have illuminated many aspects of social movements, including the rhetorical structure of social movements, the rhetorical problems confronting movement leaders, the rhetorical strategies employed to surmount these problems, the psycho-symbolic features of movement discourse, the legal and ethical dimensions of movement rhetoric, and the generic features of the rhetoric of movements. Rhetoricians can continue to investigate these and other aspects of movement rhetoric without either denigrating the value of sociological studies or inventing neologisms.[29]

Ultimately, the most important test of any scholarly concept is whether it allows us better to describe, analyze, and interpret the phenomena with which it purports to deal. Thus far, the concept "rhetorical movement" has not stood up to this test. It is much easier to announce objectives and principles than to apply them fruitfully in criticism and easier to adumbrate new approaches to rhetorical analysis than to put them into practice.[30] It is also much simpler to call for new theories than to develop them. What we need is less controversy about definitions, orientations, and presuppositions and more research.

This is not to say that such controversy should be eschewed. But as pluralism is the watchword in other areas of rhetorical scholarships, so should it be here as well. There is no reason why some analysts cannot study persuasive campaigns in general, others the broad process of social movement/change, and still others the rhetoric of social movements. All three approaches take as their subjects differing, albeit related, phenomena. The value of each will ultimately depend, not upon ringing assertions of its superiority, nor upon its claim to be the special property of any academic discipline, but upon the quality and significance of the studies conducted in its name. With this in mind, I should like briefly to suggest some directions for future scholarship in the rhetoric of social movements.

II

The place to begin is by noting that rhetorical analysts too often fail to come to terms with the intrinsically kinetic nature of movement rhetoric. As I have observed elsewhere, a social movement is not a material object that exists only in a given place and at a given time, but is a progression of human behavior which must be understood in temporal as well as in spatial terms.[31] Neither a movement nor its discourse are static. My point is not that the discourse of a movement unfolds chronologically; that is self-evident. Nor is my contention that movements proceed through various

Collective Behavior, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972), p. 249.

[29] Cf. Simons, Mechling, and Schreier, "Mobilizing for Collective Action," 13.

[30] Donald C. Bryant, "Of Style: note Buffon and Rhetorical Criticism," in *Essays on Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Thomas R. Nilsen (New York: Random House, 1968), p. 53.

[31] Stephen E. Lucas, *Portents of Rebellion: Rhetoric and Revolution in Philadelphia, 1765-76* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), p. xx.

stages that are accompanied by permutations in rhetoric; this has long been recognized. Charting the temporal progression of discourse is only the beginning step in understanding the rhetoric of a social movement. More vital are the further steps of 1) explicating the cumulative metamorphosis of discourse in response to emerging exigencies imposed from within and without the movement and 2) assaying how that metamorphosis functions. The passage of a social movement through the stages of inception, crisis and consummation is less important than the ways rhetoric helps to propel the movement from stage to stage or to retard its evolution. To demonstrate that the rhetoric of a movement is different at moment C from what it was at moment B, and different at moment B from what it was at moment A, is only propaedeutic to the crucial tasks of explaining why the discourse evolved as it did and of assessing how that evolution influenced the nature, direction, intensity, and outcome of the movement.

But rhetoric is not all that "moves" in a social movement. Social movements arise out of and are shaped by the dynamic interaction of multifarious and effervescent forces. For present purposes, I shall focus on three: objective material conditions, rhetorical discourse, and the perceptions, attitudes, and values—the "consciousness"—held by the members. None of these forces "moves" independently of the others. Scholars who wish to explicate how rhetoric functions in social movements need to deal with all three forces and the interconnections among them. Understanding as they do that rhetoric is "a vital . . . shaping agent in human affairs,"[32] rhetoricians frequently beg the question when it comes to demonstrating how rhetoric actually shapes human affairs. Too often, they adopt a sort of rhetorical determinism that oversimplifies the complex linkages between rhetorical communication and important contextual variables—institutional arrangements, socio-economic structures, technological developments, demographic patterns, environmental conditions, channels of communication, and the like. The role of rhetoric in social movements cannot be explained either by looking solely at the formal properties of movement discourse or by applying *a priori* premises about the importance of rhetoric in the construction of social reality, but only by careful investigation of the interplay between discourse and the other factors that condition the process of social movements.

Such investigation can go forward most profitably in two ways. One is by explicitly theory-oriented studies that advance carefully drawn, substantive hypotheses about the rhetoric of social movements and then explore those hypotheses precisely and systematically.[33] Another is by essentially atheoretical case studies that analyze the rhetoric of individual movements from the inside out. At present, the need for such case studies appears to be more pressing than that for theory-oriented studies because the most telling deficiency for the generation of theory about movement rhetoric is the absence of sufficient

[32] Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (1952), 188.

[33] Nor, contrary to David Zarefsky's claim, must such studies be predicated upon the assumption that movements comprise a distinct rhetorical genre, "A Skeptical View of Movement Studies," *Central States Speech Journal* [this issue]. It is one thing to identify a phenomenon and to ask what it is and how it functions; it is quite another to ask whether the phenomenon is unique. Although the latter is doubtless an important question concerning the rhetoric of social movements, it does not have to be answered affirmatively in order to construct generalizations of a theoretical order about the nature and functions of the rhetoric employed in social movements.

knowledge about the role of rhetoric in particular movements. Such knowledge will provide a crucial foundation for mature, empirically-grounded theory.

Among the kinds of case studies that need to be undertaken, perhaps foremost are ones that deal exactingly, not just with some facet or another of movement rhetoric, but with the rhetoric of individual movements from inception through culmination. One advantage of such a comprehensive approach is that it compels the analyst to treat the movement and its discourse as temporal processes, rather than as static entities. Another is that it encourages the analyst to engage the full body of movement rhetoric, rather than to focus just on one set of historically prominent addresses or on the discourse of a conspicuous leader. A study of the rhetoric of Samuel Adams, or of the Boston Massacre orations, for instance, is not a study of the American revolutionary movement. A third advantage of the comprehensive approach is that it allows one to see the rhetoric of a social movement in its full complexity. Although we have a large number of individual studies dealing with particular aspects of movement rhetoric, we do not have a good sense of the significance of those aspects vis à vis one another. For example, it is important to know that the rhetorical activities of protest movements may fulfill for participants.[34] But is is equally important to understand the relationships among this ego-function and other functions performed by movement rhetoric. One avenue to such understanding is through intensive, comprehensive study of the discourse of individual movements.

Such study is admittedly most feasible with historical movements. Although the great surge of interest in current rhetorical transactions has yielded substantial dividends, the decidedly contemporary orientation of the great bulk of movement studies leads one to question the extent to which our general understanding of the rhetoric of social movements is skewed by an excessive reliance on movements of the past two decades.[35] Of course, contributions to our knowledge of rhetorical behavior are defined less by the artifacts or acts we examine than by the questions we ask about them and the answers we provide. Still, looking at certain kinds of phenomena precludes asking certain kinds of questions. It is idle, for example, to seek to investigate the long-range rhetorical consequences of a contemporary social movement. Moreover, a certain kind of myopia is almost inescapable in studies of contemporary phenomena. The perspective afforded by the passage of time is an asset not to be lightly dismissed, particularly since there are numerous historical movements that would richly reward rhetorical scrutiny. The turbulence of the 1960's notwithstanding, the first half of the nineteenth century remains the period of greatest and most intense social ferment in American history. From the election of Jefferson to the onset of the Civil War, America witnessed a remarkable variety of social movements, including several waves of religious revivalism, powerful cru-

[34] Richard B. Gregg, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 4 (1971), 71-91.

[35] The categorization of "movement-related" studies by Simons, Mechling, and Schreier ("Mobilizing for Collective Action," note 11) appears to indicate that studies of historical movements have predominated over analyses of contemporary movements. But some of the historical studies they list can be classified as "movement studies," or even as "movement-related," only by a stretch of the imagination. Two cases in point are Michael McGuire's essays "Rhetoric, Philosophy and the Volk: Johann Gottlieb Fichte's *Addresses to the German Nation*," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 62 (1976), 135-44, and "Mythic Rhetoric in *Mein Kampf*: A Structuralist Critique," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 1-13.

sades against Masonry, Catholicism, immigrants, and slavery, and concerted efforts in behalf of utopian communalism, temperance, women's rights, and southern sectionalism. Imaginative and resourceful analysis of the discourse of such historical movements would not only be valuable in its own right, but would appreciably enrich our developing theoretical understanding of movement rhetoric in general.

By the same token, we could profit greatly by developing a body of substantive studies dealing with the rhetoric of social movements in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Rhetorical scholars have heretofore confined themselves almost exclusively to investigating movements indigenous to America or Great Britain. Yet the social, political, and religious values and institutions, as well as the rhetorical traditions and praxes, of Anglo-America are not necessarily those of other Western nations and are most certainly not those of non-Occidental nations. We should know much more than we do about the rhetoric of such movements as the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions, the millenarian quests of medieval Europe, and the anti-colonial crusades of the developing Third World nations. In studying the discourse of such movements, it will be crucial to keep in mind that the standards of rhetoric as they have developed in the West for the past 2,000 years are unique "expressions of Western culture, applicable within the context of Western cultural values." Should we seek to deal with the rhetoric of non-Western nations solely "in terms that have proved appropriate in the West, the results would be biased, inadequate, and misleading."[36] Rhetoricians who study Continental or Third World social movements will face the formidable task of mastering cultures and languages different from their own. But until such study is undertaken in earnest, our understanding of the rhetoric of social movements will remain partial and parochial.

Finally, we ought not to overlook the rhetoric of those forces that arise in opposition to social movements. Countermovement groups may be spearheaded by private citizens or by public authorities. In either case, their activities —rhetorical and nonrhetorical—almost always compose a crucial variable in the development of social movements. Once a movement has evoked active opposition, it evolves through a series of events and counterevents, assertions and counterassertions, strategies and counterstrategies. We cannot explicate adequately the rhetoric of a movement until we take into account the exigencies it was designed to surmount. Among such exigencies are those imposed by the rhetoric of hostile forces outside the movement. Although that rhetoric may be, strictly speaking, extrinsic to a movement, it is crucial to comprehending the functional attributes of movement discourse. Moreover, the rhetoric of countermovement advocates is a subject that merits serious inquiry in and of itself. Like other scholars, rhetoricians have generally been more interested in studying social change than social maintenance. We need to learn much more about the symbolic processes of social control, and investigating countermovement rhetoric in defense of established ideas and institutions is one route to such learning.

"What should we be doing?" and "How should we do it?" are perennial questions for any area of scholarship. By posing them in this essay, my aim has not been so much to criticize what

[36] Robert T. Oliver, *Communication and Culture in Ancient India and China* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1971), p. 3.

has been done in the past as to suggest ways of improving what is to be done in the future. We should now be ready to put at rest disputes over definition, focus, and terminology and to get on with the task of building a more substantial and sophisticated body of research in all areas of movement studies.

DEFINING SOCIAL MOVEMENTS BY THEIR RHETORICAL FORM

Robert S. Cathcart

WHAT are social movements, and how, if at all, may they be distinguished from campaigns, pressure groups, lobbies, or other forms of collective action? At stake in such definitional issues is the legitimacy of movement study as a distinctive scholarly domain. With some variation, sociologists have argued that social movements are indeed distinguishable from other collectives by dint of being organized, noninstitutional collectives that mobilize to bring about or resist change.[1] Rhetoricians studying movements, for the most part, have accepted this definition. But they have had to confront the additional question of whether the rhetoric of social movements is distinctive from the rhetoric of other collectives. Beginning with Leland M. Griffin's 1952 essay "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements,"[2] many rhetorical scholars have accepted the position that social movements have a rhetorical component, that this component has elements peculiar to movements, and that analysis of the rhetorical component can make a significant contribution to knowledge.

In a 1972 essay I questioned the position which suggests that movements can be known *apart* from their rhetorical component.[3] Using Burkean concepts of dramatism and Leland M. Griffin's application of them in his 1969 essay,[4] I argued that "movements are essentially rhetorical in nature" and that sociological definitions, though adequate for *post hoc* explanations of movements, do not account for the socio-symbolic interactions which must exist for some collectives to be identified as social movements. My position was that the rhetoric of collectives designated as "social movements" cannot be distinguished in form from the rhetoric of lobbies, campaigns, and pressure groups, unless and until, there is also a "dialectical enjoinment in the moral arena." I claimed that this is the necessary rhetorical interaction which orders perceptions in such a way as to distinguish a movement from other forms of collective behavior. Further, I contended that it is a mistake to assume that a social movement could come into being or be recognized apart from the response of an establishment which completes the dialectical enjoinment.

In a later essay I elaborated by adding that there is a form of rhetoric called "confrontational" that is unique to the process through which movements come

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1 See Herbert W. Simons, Elizabeth Mechling, and Howard N. Schreier, "Mobilizing for Collective Action From the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," in *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory*, ed. Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers (Boston: Allyn & Bacon), in press; John Wilson, *Introduction to Social Movements* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), Chapter 1 for a review of sociological definitions of movements.

2 *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (1952), 188-96.

3 "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," *Western Speech*, 36 (1972), 82-88.

4 "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," in *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke*, ed. William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 456-78.

to be recognized.[5] I contrasted confrontational rhetoric with managerial rhetoric. Managerial rhetoric is utilized in the management of conflict and change when there is agreement on basic values and a belief in the perfectability of the system, whereas confrontational rhetoric challenges the system's values and its perfectability. This confrontation produces a unique counter-rhetoric which "casts out" the protesters, recognizes the impiety of their rhetoric, and affirms the threat to the system. From this counter-rhetoric emerges the dialectical enjoinment which defines a collective as a social movement in the public mind. It is my contention that social movements are by nature rhetorical and that their uniqueness cannot be adequately accounted for without a rhetorical theory of movements.

A rhetorical theory adequate to the study of social movements begins with the question, how do we know that some collective behavior is a social movement? Or, what is it that people perceive which causes them to react to some collective behavior as a social movement? My answer is that we recognize the difference between a social movement and other change-seeking collectives only through the interpretations that are made of the rhetorical interactions taking place among the dissidents, the establishment, and the publics involved.

A movement does not "move" in the objective world. It can only be *interpreted* through bits and pieces of behavior and "created" by the symbolic form and meaning these verbal and non-verbal behaviors take on in relationship to already established symbolic forms and meanings. A movement is perceived, created, and responded to *symbolically* as its confrontational strategies are juxtaposed with the symbolic forms and contents of the established and legitimized collectives with which it interacts. I agree with McGee, that it is the language characterizations which lead to the perception that a movement exists.[6] I do not, however, agree with his position that a social movement is *only a metaphor* for a pattern of language characterizations. Movements do exist in space and over time. They have membership, leadership, and organization. They do manage resources, and, above all, they engage in acts that create and identify the "reality" of the movement. In our perception of a social movement, these material aspects of movements become important as they acquire symbolic meaning. While a social movement may have certain concrete aspects that exist in space and over time, it is the language characterizations which give them meaning and allow us to symbolically place them in a category designated as "social movement."

Though language mediates experience, we are not free to use and interpret language as we choose. Rather, we are forced to assess meaning and attribute motives in accordance with established symbols. As Hugh Daziel Duncan states, "When we begin communication, we enter hierarchial relationships which are determined by the consensually validated symbols of the group in which we seek to play a part." He explains: "A group

[5] "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 43 (1978), 233-47.

[6] Michael C. McGee states this point very clearly in his paper, "The Problems of So-called 'Movement Theory'; A Position Paper," for the SCA Seminar on Social Movements, San Antonio, 1979. He claims that, "Movement stands between a material environment shared by a human collectivity and an awareness, a fundamental consciousness, of such environment. . . . When language-characterizations of the environment change in such a way as to make 'movement' the acceptable metaphor . . . 'movement' has occurred. Further, we can document 'movement' so conceived with the evidence of changed language-characterizations, articulations of consciousness already mediated by the people who confronted and executed movement" (p. 6).

is obviously dependent on physical objects, on inherited systems of signs, and on the biological characteristics of individuals acting within the group, but these do not in themselves constitute the group. Only when signs are invested with meaning and emotion can they be used to develop attitudes. The group as an object of reason, faith, or emotion is created and sustained in the communication of attitude but these attitudes must be objectified in concrete symbols before we can act together."[7]

If we accept Duncan's picture of the social order, then we see that a social movement can be perceived only when it questions the established hierarchial relationships and consensually validated symbols. A social movement can be said to emerge when the languaging strategies of a change-seeking collective clash with the languaging strategies of the establishment and thereby produce the perception of a group's operating outside the established social hierarchy.[8]

The figure-ground relationship is important to an understanding of what produces awareness of social movements. Any established social system is dynamic, hierarchial, multi-institutional, power-oriented, and competitive. It is always in flux, but it is also structured and orderly. It gives members a sense of place, a feeling of belonging, and a direction for the future. It maintains an establishment which promotes order and stability, confers legitimacy on those groups which support the system, and sanctions activities which bind together its members. It promotes the rituals which daily remind the members of their role and responsibility and makes them aware of the importance of the system to their welfare and happiness.

It is within this system of ritualized, legitimized, established order that we react to the actions of those who promote or resist change. The activities of the majority of individuals and groups obviously create the background against which activities of change-seeking collectives emerge as figure.[9] The figure begins to appear when there is a confrontation which sets a collective apart from legitimized or sanctioned groups. When, for example, a collective is labeled un-American, there is a perception of illegitimacy, disorder, and threat. The established orderliness of the system is "the American way." The actions of the collective when juxtaposed with this view are perceived of as anti-American.

I believe that the key to defining a social movement lies in the perception that confrontation has taken place rather than in the mere existence of a non-institutionalized collective or in the act of mobilization for change. It is the emergence of a rhetoric and counter-rhetoric raising the possibility that the system itself is in question and that a group can successfully challenge it that creates the perception of a social movement.

A second question to answer in developing a rhetorical theory of social movements is, at what point is a social movement perceived to exist? A social movement does not appear on the scene fully developed. Some change-seeking collectives become social movements, and others do not. Most collectives with serious grievances pursue within the system channels of change such as petitioning, mobilizing, lobbying, and

[7] *Communication and Social Order* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 431.

[8] See Charles A. Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (1976), 88-94, for a detailed explanation of why all movement acts are languaging strategies and how these contribute to the essential rheorical nature of movements.

[9] See Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1964), chs. 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9 for an explanation of why expressive and symbolic functions of the polity are central and necessary to social stability.

campaigning before they attempt more militant or radical means of change.[10] If these methods of change succeed in resolving the grievance, it is not likely that a collective will be labeled a social movement. For example, both the National Rifle Association and Handgun Control, Inc. use petitioning, campaigning, and the like to resist or promote change, but neither is perceived as a "social movement." Even though both exist outside the normal decision-making establishment and exhibit characteristics of "bottom up" organization,[11] they do not engage in a rhetoric which produces confrontation and dialectical enjoinment.

On the other hand, it is possible that a group might simply proclaim itself a "movement." Here again, the response from the establishment is crucial in determining the perception and development of the movement. The establishment can co-opt the issues by addressing itself to the grievance rather than the group; it can ignore the grievance and the group; it can respond with ridicule or amusement. If a budding movement is co-opted, ignored, or subjected to ridicule, it must react if it is to continue to exist. It might engage in sit-ins, picketing or even violent attacks. Depending on how these kinds of activities are responded to, publics may begin to view the group as threatening to the the system. If the establishment agents fail to respond appropriately, the moral legitimacy of the establishment can be called into question. This indirectly gives support to the claims of the collective. But, it is not only the rhetoric of the collective that is being viewed by the public; it is also the counter-rhetoric of the establishment.

This interactive process is not always quickly completed or readily understood. It can continue over a long period of time without reaching the point where everyone is sure that a social movement exists. For example, the FALN is a collective that has for years been involved in a struggle for a free and independent Puerto Rico. It has petitioned the United States and Puerto Rican authorities, it has mobilized supporters, and it has progressively become more violent—planting bombs in banks, corporate headquarters, and state offices. The reaction of the establishment has been to the terrorist tactics of the group, not to the claims that Puerto Rico is an oppressed colony of the United States.

The establishment has engaged in a rhetoric which defines the FALN as criminals or demented terrorists. The FALN members have responded with a rhetoric which portrays themselves as defenders of freedom and warriors against an immoral United States, which colonized Puerto Rico while proclaiming belief in freedom and self-determination. Is the FALN a social movement or just a gang of murderers? The unfolding dramatization of confrontation, dialectical enjoinment, and counter-rhetoric will help determine the answer.

A very different case is that of the Esperanto Society. For almost 70 years it has organized, recruited, petitioned, and promulgated to get nations to accept Esperanto as the world language. Is it

[10] John Bowers and Donovan Ochs, *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1971), p. 17, for example, argue that for movements to take place it is necessary that agitation go through a cumulative process of first petitioning, then solidifying, etc.

[11] Simons, Mechling and Schreier, take the position that the essential characteristic of a social movement is its "bottom up" attribute. Social movements are "organized and sustained efforts at securing preferred outcomes by groups at the margins of society—noninstitutionalized collectives that promote or resist change from the 'bottom up.'" If they are suggesting that "bottom up" means that movements arise only from groups at the lower end of the social-economic hierarchy, I do not agree. Movements can begin with a collective at any level which becomes rhetorically and symbolically defined as outside the system.

a social movement? It is a noninstitutionalized collective that began as a "bottom up" change-seeking group, but I doubt that most people perceive it as a social movement. The reason is the lack of dialectical enjoinment in the moral arena.

Within every system there are groups that use agitational rhetoric but are not perceived as social movements by either the general public or their own members. It is my contention that the dialectical tension in the moral arena causes the establishment and change-seeking groups alike to begin to engage in the rhetorical and symbolic behaviors necessary to the recognition of a social movement.

A third question to answer in developing a rhetorical theory of movements is, how do change-seeking collectives play out their role once they have been recognized as a social movement? Do they follow some predetermined set of stages like inception, crisis, and consummation?

This is a difficult question. Whatever descriptive labels are used, it is obvious that the growth of a movement is very much related to the ability of the change-seeking collective to respond effectively to the counter-rhetoric and control activities of the establishment. Movements lack the resources, both symbolic and physical, to meet the establishment on an equal footing. Movements gain strength and power mainly through their ability to create doubts about the legitimacy and morality of the establishment. They grow not so much by direct recruitment as by ability to get the public to withhold support from the system. If a movement is not successful in keeping up the confrontation with the establishment, it may have a quick demise. If the establishment is successful in co-opting the movement, it can arrest development and leave the movement in a state of limbo. In short, movements do not necessarily escalate neatly through ascending stages of militancy and violence. Depending on the rhetorical interactions with the establishment, they may progress, fall back, or change direction.

Social movements develop not only through struggle with the establishment, but also out of struggle within the change-seeking collective itself. Confrontation involves movement members in questions about their own morality and their contribution to the evils of the existing system.[12] Decisions over tactics raise questions about ends as well as means. For some members, a total rejection of the establishment is the only route to redemption and a new order. Yet other members may try to resolve contradictions and feelings of guilt by bringing the movement more into line with established values and accepted methods of change.[13] Some members may opt for petitioning and lobbying legislative bodies. Others may run for office on a platform designed to bring about desired change through the legislative and legal system. When members of a movement engage in such mainstream political activities, they are more likely to elicit favorable responses from power elites, the media, and the public. But there is a danger in using only acceptable change strategies. Moderate factions might prevail, and the movement would face the possibility of being "defined" out of existence. It could become a quasilegitimate institution that uses the same form of rhetoric as any other sanctioned group upholding the moral legitimacy of the system. Only to

[12] Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (1969), 1-8.

[13] For an excellent analysis of the key role of confrontation in the development of a movement see Robert L. Heath, "Dialectical Confrontation: A Strategy of Black Radicalism," *Central States Speech Journal*, 24 (1973), 168-77.

the degree that a movement is able to continue to confront the system on moral grounds and engender a counter-rhetoric in kind will it remain a movement.

The development and progress of a social movement is related to its use of a rhetoric of confrontation, which, as I have argued elsewhere, is different in form from the managerial rhetoric which makes identification and cooperation possible.[14] Confrontational rhetoric leads to a dialectical enjoinment in the moral arena, where questions about the essence of the social order take precedence over opposing strategies for change. Collectives which are more concerned with means than ends, or which try to enhance their status in the hierarchy, or which engage in activities designed to improve or perfect the established order do not produce dialectical tension. Only when the clash is fundamental to the essences of the established order is a dialectical clash created in the moral arena. When this happens, the conflict has escalated to what Kenneth Burke calls the dialectical level, where terms require an understanding of their opposites. He notes that dialectical terms "belong not in the order of *motion and perception*, but rather in the order of *action and idea*. Here are words for *principles and essence*."[15]

What makes for social movements is this transition from the rhetorical to the dialectical level, where the establishment or its agents respond in terms of essence and principle and, thereby, give shape to the collective as being outside the order and therefore immoral or illegitimate. The collective is forced to respond to this dialectic because such issues of "essence" must be dealt with before matters of "motion" (change, status, etc.) can be resolved. By responding with confrontational acts, the collective further defines itself as "outside" the "legitimate" order. In this way, members themselves as well as the public come to perceive that there is a social movement.

In this paper I have asked three questions: How do we know that some collective behavior is a social movement? At what point in time does a social movement come into existence? How do social movements play out their role? Answers to the first two questions can be ascertained *only through analysis of the rhetorical interaction among the change-seeking collective, the establishment, and the public.* The answer to the third question requires an understanding of the socio-political pressures that exist both within and outside movement. I do not imply that there is nothing else to be said about what goes on within a movement. We must understand that movements are also social entities which organize, recruit members, develop communication networks and manage resources. The rhetoric produced by these "inside the movement" needs is, however, a managerial rhetoric, —a rhetoric, for the most part, hardly different in form from that of any established collective.

When movement rhetoric is examined apart from the nexus of the interactions among the change-seeking collective, the establishment, and the public, it is difficult to find anything unique about it. When the rhetoric of confrontation, that is, the dialectical enjoinment in the moral arena, is isolated, however, there emerges a characteristic rhetoric. It is in this area that rhetorical scholars can offer insights which will add another dimension to the scholarship of political scientists and sociologists. I am not

[14] "Movements: Confrontation as Rhetorical Form," 233-47.

[15] Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1969), p. 184.

saying that rhetorical studies of movements should be confined to this aspect only, but that a rhetorical theory of social movements is possible and that a beginning for such a theory lies in the area of the rhetoric of confrontation.

HISTORY AND THEORY IN THE STUDY OF THE RHETORIC OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

James R. Andrews

DISCUSSING Leland Griffin's seminal essay, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," Edwin Black observed that Griffin, by "suggesting a reconstitution of the subject matter of rhetorical criticism from the individual speaker or the individual speech to the persuasive movement," had "opened a new and exciting prospect to rhetorical criticism."[1] In the thirty years since Griffin's essay was published, the study of social movements by rhetorical scholars has become extensive and serious. But there has also been something of a revolution in rhetorical criticism in recent years. As Black has put it "There is less uniformity in the techniques of rhetorical criticism and in the sorts of subjects deemed appropriate to it, less agreement on its proper role or its ideal condition, more contention, more experiment, more confusion, more vitality."[2] What is true of criticism in general is also true of the study of the rhetoric of social movements in particular.

One aim of this symposium is to systematize what we know and to focus future research. The goal of this paper is to contribute to these efforts by offering and discussing the following propositions. First, theory must be grounded in and related to the history of movement rhetoric. Second, theory can enrich historical investigation by suggesting lines of inquiry and patterns of interpretation. Third, historical investigation can identify complexities that have the potential for confounding or enhancing theory construction. Fourth, historical investigation which is free of the constraints of theory validation or extension may, in the long run, provide more useful data for theory construction.

Theory and History

The exciting, and frustrating, characteristic of a movement is that it *moves*, and what makes it move, in large measure, is the way language is manipulated to control or interpret events. In this sense, rhetoric makes moving possible—moving in all directions, pushing, shoving, lurching forward and falling backward as the movement encounters its environment. Growing out of the environment, intruding into the environment, reacting to the environment, and becoming a part of the environment, the social movement is simultaneously a rhetorical response and a rhetorical stimulus.

Out of this jumble of events, some sense must be made by those who experience them. Any set of human actions is likely to be perceived differently when experienced from the way they are perceived, recollected, or reconstructed. "The historian's choice of

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[1] *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), p. 22. The reference is to Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (1952), 184-88.

[2] Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (1965; rpt. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), pp. ix-x.

significant incidents," Wedgwood once observed, "is often different from that of contemporaries."[3] What rhetoric, itself, does is to define and interpret the significance of human activity for those engaged in the activity.

Theorists seek to explain how rhetoric performs this defining and interpreting function predictably in social movements in general. But a theory of the rhetoric of social movements can best be generated when it is grounded in the history of movement rhetoric.[4] To be sure, few theoretical arguments about the rhetoric of social movements ignore history altogether. The quality of such arguments, however, is much improved when based on a developed and detailed historical case study rather than a few selected examples that provoke the theorist's imagination.

Although theory often grows out of basic historical research, it is also true that theory can stimulate and offer direction to historians. The investigation of real cases can be aided when rhetorical scholars are stimulated to look for consistent patterns that have been observed and generalized. At the least, theoretical categories can direct historical inquiry. The work of Campbell on the women's movement, Gregg on modern protest rhetoric, and my own study of the role of coercion and persuasion in the student protest at Columbia are but a few examples of studies that have been shaped, or at least stimulated, by theoretical perspectives.[5]

The examination of historical cases and the construction of theory, then, are inextricably bound together. Historical investigation is the data base, as it were, for theory; theory, for its part, can enrich the historian's inventional process. At the same time, historical inquiry is necessarily atheoretical in a fundamental way.

Butterfield, in his indictment of the Whig interpretation of history, warned historians against precisely what theorists must do—generalize the predictability of human behavior. It is not for the historian, Butterfield asserted, "to stress and magnify the similarities between one age and another. . . . Rather, it is his work to destroy those very analogies which we imagine to exist."[6] Although scholars in all fields recognize the immense complexity of human behavior, historians have long been particularly suspicious of theory. As Plumb has argued, for example, particular constructions of the meaning of the past have been used in order to exert social control.[7] The rhetorical historian's independence of theory must come through his or her willingness to examine the process of rhetorical influence without preconceived theoretical notions of how that process must have worked in particular cases. Smith and Windes, in their critique of current movement theory, argue, for example, that theorists' particular focus on radical

[3] C. V. Wedgewood, *The King's War: 1641-1647*. (London, Collins Fontana, 1958), p. 11.

[4] Griffin's seminal essay, for example, grew out of his careful study of the Anti-Masonic movement. Leland Milburn Griffin, "The Antimasonic Persuasion: A Study of Public Address in the American Antimasonic Movement, 1826-1838." Diss. Cornell University 1950. More recently, Smith and Windes' statement on "innovational movements" emerged from their investigation of the Sunday School movement in nineteenth century America. Ralph R. Smith and Russel R. Windes, "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 140-53.

[5] Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 74-86; Richard B. Gregg, "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 4 (1971), 71-91; James R. Andrews, "Confrontation at Columbia: A Case Study in Coercive Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (1969), 9-16.

[6] Herbert Butterfield, *The Whig Interpretation of History* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 17.

[7] J. H. Plumb, *The Death of the Past* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1971).

segments of movement rhetoric has distorted, or at least limited, a broader understanding of movement rhetoric. Now their point may well be arguable, but it certainly suggests that the historical/critical process could certainly be skewed significantly if the historian began his or her investigation with the preconception of how rhetoric operated in all movements.[8]

The historian, by asking the question, how did rhetoric function in a particular social movement, may uncover complexities of or deviations from current theory, and may consequently generate data enriching the development of theory. Essentially, atheoretical historical studies provide less tainted information with which theorists can subsequently deal. These propositions may be further explicated by brief reference to the rhetoric of one historical movement.

Henry Hunt and the Movement for Political Reform

For radicals during the Regency period, the most common established way of communicating with Parliament was by means of petitions. Petitions, when presented in the House of Commons, always occasioned a speech by a supporter of the petition and rarely provoked extended debate. But more important, particularly for the unrepresented working class, was the process of preparing and presenting the petitions and the speechmaking called forth by the mass meetings at which petitions were approved. These mass meetings provided a way of expressing feelings and attitudes for those who had few other ways of doing so; from them emerged a truly radical rhetoric shaped by situational factors that denied the masses both direct access to the power structure and a means of voicing their discontent.[9]

Radical speakers who addressed the petition meetings faced several interrelated problems: to speak meaningfully to the crowds attending, to avoid provoking the local magistrates to take immediate punitive action, to goad the upper classes into concessions without frightening them into repression, and to maintain the image of the peaceable constitutionalist employing lawful and traditionally sanctioned means of reform.[10] Naturally, no one succeeded in solving all of these difficulties, but the radical speaker who came closest was Henry Hunt, "impudent, active, vulgar; in almost all respects the best mob orator of the day."[11] His rhetoric mixed ominous allusions to the day when "men would demand their rights . . . or die nobly in the struggle," with denunciations of "the children of corruption, who fattened on the vitals of the country."[12]

[8] Smith and Windes, p. 142.

[9] The fact that there was distress among the lower classes is exceedingly well-documented in almost any history of the period. For examples of contemporary accounts that detail different aspects of the problem, see the following Parliamentary papers: *Second Report from the Select Committee on the State of Education Among the Lower Orders in the Metropolis 1816* (427) iv; *Select Committee on Criminal Commitments and Convictions (2nd Report) 1828* (545) vi; *Report of the Select Committee on Factory Children's Labour* [the Sadler Report], Vol. xv, 1831-1832. *First Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Collect Information in the Manufacturing Districts Relative to the Employment of Children in Factories . . . : with Minutes of Evidence and Reports of District Commissioners 1833* (450) xx. See also, Thomas Babington Macaulay's speech in the House of Commons, March 19, 1832: *Parliamentary Debates, Third Series*, XI (1832), 454-55; Samuel Bamford, *Passages in the Life of a Radical* (London: Heywood, 1941).

[10] For a discussion of a contemporary radical leader's problems, some of which directly parallel those faced in the nineteenth century, see Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 1-11.

[11] Cited by Henry Jephson, *The Platform: Its Rise and Progress*, 2 vols. (London: Macmillan, 1892), pp. 1, 383.

[12] Cited by E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York:

Henry Hunt was a powerful—and flamboyant—orator, in both language and delivery, and addressed the cheering multitudes with consummate skill.[13] E. P. Thompson observed that the "very frustrations of a popular movement, in which thousands of powerless men were pitted against an armed establishment, were released in hyperbole; and Hunt, as the orator of the great reform assemblies, knew how to touch these responses."[14] Touching the mob, however, was not regarded in better quarters as a worthy thing to do. As Lord Castleraegh frostily remarked, "I am grown as popular in 1821 as unpopular formerly, and, of the two, unpopularity is the more convenient and gentlemanlike."[15] Hunt was and still is regarded as a demogogue. Even the generally sympathetic Thompson concludes that "Hunt voiced, not principle or even well-formulated Radical strategy, but the emotions of the moment. Striving always to say whatever would provoke the loudest cheer, he was not the leader but the captive of the least stable portion of the crowd."[16]

This view of Hunt, however, overlooks the important role of the agitator in movement rhetoric. The emotions he expressed were real and salient to the working class. As Wendell Phillips, another great agitator, once observed. "The great mass of people can never be made to stay and argue a long question. . . . They must be made to feel it through the hides of their idols."[17]

Representative in form and content of Hunt's rhetoric was a speech he delivered at a mass meeting held at Spa Fields on November 15, 1816.[18] Hunt's speech addressed two audiences in a distinctive way.

First, he issued a warning to the upper classes. The threat to the powerful is unmistakable even if implicit enough to avoid the charge of out-and-out incitement. Physical force was to give way to the petitioning process, but such force *was* surely justifiable as a last resort. The address to the Prince Regent called upon him to recommend to Parliament that it "listen, before it is *too late,* to those repeated prayers of the People."[19]

Second, Hunt took great pains to convince the working class to perceive itself positively. There was an image of the labouring class, held and propagated by the ruling class, that cast the "lower orders" in an unsavory role. Charles Kingsley was later to observe that "young men believed . . . that the masses were their natural enemies," and that they would have to be prepared to fight to save their property from being pillaged and their sisters from being ravished.[20] David Giddies, in attacking a bill to set up parish schools for the poor, told the House of Commons in 1807 that educating the "labouring classes of the poor" was a measure "pregnant with mischief." Education

Vintage Books, 1963), p. 630, n.: *Examiner,* 17 November 1816, p. 730.

[13] Henry Hunt, known as "Orator" Hunt, was born in Wilstshire in 1773, the son of a prosperous farmer. He was generally acknowledged as the leading radical spokesman for parliamentary reform after the Napoleonic Wars. He was returned for the popular borough of Preston and sat in the House of Commons in 1830-33. He faulted the Reform Bill of 1832 on the grounds that it was much too restricted, giving no political power to the working classes. For an account of his speaking in 1819, see Charles W. Lomas, "Orator Hunt at Peterloo and Smithfield," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 48 (1962), 400-05.

[14] Thompson, p. 623.

[15] Cited by R. H. White, *Waterloo to Peterloo* (London: William Heinemann, 1957), p. 78.

[16] Thompson, p. 630.

[17] Cited by Mary G. McEdwards, "Agitative Rhetoric: Its Nature and Effect," *Western Speech,* 32 (1968), 38.

[18] The particular address offered at this meeting was to the Prince Regent; it was in all essentials similar to petitions presented to Parliament.

[19] All excerpts of Hunt's speech are from the *Examiner,* 17 November 1816, pp. 730-732.

[20] Cited by George Rude, *The Crowd in History 1780-1848* (New York: John Wiley, 1964), p. 182.

would undermine the role that Giddies clearly saw as the proper role of the lower classes: being "good servants in agriculture, and other laborious employments, to which their rank in society has destined them."[21] Canning, as Hunt alleged, was pleased to refer to "the swinish multitude."[22] The image of the labouring class was seen in vivid relief when contrasted with the middle class. The workers were consistently distinguished from the "respectable" elements of society. And it was the "middling classes" that Sir James Mackintosh believed "possess the largest share of sense and virtue."[23] Political cartoonists, always especially savage no matter what side they were on, caricatured the lower classes and their radical leaders. In July, 1819, a cartoon, "The Smithfield Parliament: i.e., universal suffrage—the new speaker addressing the members," shows Hunt with the head of an ass speaking to an audience of cattle, sheep, pigs, and donkeys. "I shall be ambitious, indeed," the Hunt depiction says, "if I thought my bray would be heard by the immense and respectable multitude I have the honour to address." The audience of domestic animals applaud, murmur approval, and shout, "here here!—bravo!"[24]

To undermine such caricatures, Hunt redefined the images of both the working class and the ruling class by exalting the former and exerating the latter. Taxation, he said, was at the heart of all distress. The people were being taxed unmercifully to retire a debt resulting from fighting a war to suppress liberty (the war against Napoleonic France) and from maintaining an army in France to uphold the tyrannical Bourbons against the wishes of the French people, to keep a standing army at home to awe Englishmen, and to provide a plethora of pensions and sinecures for the family, friends, and political supporters of the ruling class. The solution, said Hunt, was to provide representation of the people in the House of Commons, which would then put an end to corruption. Such an argument cast the lower classes as the producers of taxes and as the useful portion of society.[25]

The deference of servant to master and the conviction that one's station in life was not only inferior but inescapable, worked against self-respect for the lower classes. In his speech, Hunt combined argument with style to portray a much different kind of contrast between the classes. He used stylistic elements to establish a vision of the "oppressors" as vile parasites who bore down upon the workers. The metaphor portrayed England's rulers as loathsome scavengers, the "children of corruption" who "fatten on the vitals of the country." Those who "devoured" the people's earnings "gorged and fattened on the spoils of an oppressed nation." Obviously, such men were hardly to be deferred to, admired, or, ultimately, obeyed.

To establish group consciousness, Hunt relied largely on contrast. He juxtaposed "the boroughmongering faction, who thought of nothing but oppressing the people," against a positive image of the "people" themselves. The people, according to Hunt, suffered and were yet patient and brave through their sufferings. Taxed on his "loaf," his "pot of beer," and his "bushel of salt," forced by taxes to pay double for "his soap, candles, sugar, tea, and other articles,"

[21] *Parliamentary Debates*, First Series, IX (1807), p. 798.

[22] Jephson, II, p. 385.

[23] Cited by John Cannon, *Parliamentary Reform 1640-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 176.

[24] Thomas Wright, *England Under the House of Hanover*, 2 vols. (1848; rpt. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1971) II, 457.

[25] Indeed, when Hunt returned to London in 1822 after his incarceration in Ilchester Goal, he was greeted by "The Committee of the Useful Classes," Thompson, p. 775.

the labourer was a "miserable victim." The "People of England" might be "hungry" and "naked," they might be an "unhappy and starving People," but they were "industrious and patient" nonetheless. The contrast was clear. There were the oppressors and the victims; those taxed on the necessities of life and those profligates who spent the tax; the plunderers and the plundered; the industrious People of England and the scavengers who exploited them. The patient victim would seem to be justified in throwing off the yoke, but violence, Hunt recognized, would be "folly." Nevertheless, the right to make demands was unquestionable.

Admittedly, this illustration is not the full analysis and description of the rhetoric of a movement alluded to in the first section of this paper. It is the merest distillation of a much more intensive study. But as an example, it may serve to highlight the major points advanced earlier in this paper.

Theoretical Implications and Further Research

Simons and his colleagues have offered a definition of social movements as "sustained efforts by non-institutionalized collectives to mobilize resources, resist counter-pressures and exert external influence in behalf of a cause."[26] To the student of rhetoric, the crucial consideration is precisely how these "sustained efforts" translate into rhetorical behaviors.

A collective must first be conscious of itself. Any movement must deal somehow with social perceptions of reality by using rhetoric to alter, shape, and extend the ways in which the world is seen by those living in it. If one were to look carefully at the rhetorical response to societal problems in the early stages of a movement, he/she might provide data for hypotheses that delineates a strategy generalizable to what might be called the "collectivization" stage. Looking at the rhetoric of radical reformers like Henry Hunt, theorists interested in the formation of coalitions might discern ways in which the vilification of authority plays a positive role in social movements. Thompson tends to see the "demagogic element" as encouraging "the wholly unconstructive rhetoric of denunciation."[27] But was Hunt's denunciation so obviously illogical? On the contrary, it played a vital role in shaping the lower classes' perception of themselves. From the historical-rhetorical analysis, then, a possible hypothesis emerges: Groups must define themselves in a positive manner before they can truly become a collective, and rhetorical strategies such as denunciation may further the prerequisite group consciousness. Some theorists would not find this a particularly novel idea, but the rhetoric of Henry Hunt does provide data with which one can deal.

Other theorists may wish to examine the rhetoric of British reformers from a social knowledge perspective since "the over-arching function of social knowledge," according to Farrell, "is to transform the society into a community."[28] The efforts of radicals to deal with the conflicting audiences might well be examined with an eye to discovering how radicals attempted to establish for these audiences a "personal relationship to other actors in the social world." A fuller understanding of the rhetorical problems faced by reformers might be

[26] Herbert W. Simons, Elizabeth Mechling, and Howard N. Schreier, "Mobilizing for Collective Action from the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," in *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory*, eds. Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon), in press.

[27] Thompson, p. 623.

[28] Thomas B. Farrell, "Knowledge, Consensus, and Rhetorical Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 62 (1976), 11.

reached by exploring Farrell's contention that both advocates and audiences "will—of necessity—presume a kind of knowledge which depends upon our direct or indirect experiences of collective 'others,' and which applies an interest to these others which is generalizable."

Still other theorists might find in the discourse of men like Henry Hunt clues to the nature and function of ideographs in social movements. In a recent study, McGee suggested the more careful study of what he termed the "ideograph" based on the argument "that the ideology of a community is established by the usage of such terms in specifically rhetorical discourse, for such use as constitute excuses for specific beliefs and behaviors made by those who executed the history of which they were a part."[29] The study of nineteenth-century reformist rhetoric, particularly that stream of which Hunt is a representative, would seem to be a particularly fruitful area in which to search for the ideograph in action, since, according to McGee, "an ideograph is an ordinary language term found in political discourse. It is a high-order abstraction representing collective commitment to a particular but equivocal and ill-defined normative goal. It warrants the use of power, it excuses behavior and belief which might otherwise be perceived as eccentric or anti-social, and guides behavior and belief into channels easily recognized by a community as acceptable and laudible."[30]

It might also be that the particular forms of language used by reformists of all stripes could provide a basis for useful theoretical constructions. As Jensen, who recently studied the use of metaphor in British debates on the American revolution, observed that, "a complex, abstract, fluid reality may be made inappropriately into a simple, concrete, and static 'reality' through the metaphor."[31] Simons and his colleagues, citing Lucas on radical Whig rhetoric in pre-Revolutionary Philadelphia, conclude that one of the long-term effects that movements have on the forms of rhetoric used by later groups is that its "style of discourse may also set a precedent."[32] Both the enemies of reform who were apt to describe the masses as the "swinish multitude" and the radicals who saw those in power as the "children of corruption" offer highly suggestive lines of inquiry and masses of data for those scholars who seek to explicate the rhetorical power of metaphor.[33]

In these instances, and in others that could be adduced, it is clear that theory and history can interact to the mutual enrichment of both. Given the data generated by an historical study, theorists are provided with more evidence against which to test their constructs. In turn, theoretical constructs may suggest useful lines of inquiry for historical study as well as offering explanations for what otherwise might be puzzling.

There is, of course, a caveat. Propositions that assert the independence of rhetoric and theory should suggest that over-reliance on theoretical constructs can lead to intellectual myopia. There is great danger, for example, if the his-

[29] Michael Calvin McGee, "The 'Ideograph': A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66 (1980), 1-16.

[30] McGee, p. 15.

[31] J. Vernon Jensen, "British Voices on the Eve of the American Revolution: Trapped by the Family Metaphor," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 43.

[32] Simons, Mechling, and Schreier, pp. 133-34.

[33] See, for example, Michael M. Osborn and Douglas Ehninger, "The Metaphor in Public Address," *Speech Monographs*, 29 (1962), 223-34; Michael M. Osborn, "The Evolution of the Theory of Metaphor in Rhetoric," *Western Speech*, 31 (1967), 121-31; Michael Osborn, "Archetypal Metaphor in Rhetoric: The Light-Dark Family," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 53 (1967), 115-26; William E. Rickert, "Winston Churchill's Archetypal Metaphors: A Mythopoetic Translation of World War II," *Central States Speech Journal*, 28 (1977), 106-12.

torian conceives his/her task simply as a search for ideographs, or as a means of establishing the ways in which any group has created its own self-image. Clearly, this argument is made by Smith and Windes. They assert that, "first, students of public address may give inordinate attention to collective persuasive action in which the establishment-conflict pattern can be discerned, ignoring important collective acts which cannot be interpreted through a dialectic of radical division. Second, the nature of collective acts might be distorted in order to pick the mold of the establishment-conflict pattern."[34] Their solution is to identify different kinds of movements that call forth different rhetorical patterns. But even this has certain inherent difficulties for the historian/critic. They recognize that "all movements may employ one or more" of the strategies they describe as particularly characteristic of "innovational movements" and argue that "a consistent and necessary pattern of usage" is the key to determining the "innovational movement." The pitfall the historian must avoid in discerning patterns of historical events is the imposition of consistency at the expense of complexity. Smith and Windes allege, for example, that "the innovational movement is distinct from the establishment-conflict movement in that the latter calls for a reconstruction of society's values, its perceptions of worth and its class arrangements; whereas the former acts with the expectation that the changes it demands will not disturb the symbols and constraints of existing values or modify the social hierarchy."[35] I would submit that the movement for political reform in England in the early nineteenth century, while it encompassed diverse groups and demonstrably divergent goals, could not be neatly described by such a distinction since the *interaction* of the various elements of the movement can only be understood when one realizes that both sets of perceptions and demands described by Smith and Windes were operating simultaneously within what can most logically be conceived of as one movement.[36]

As the present generation of scholars undertakes careful and systematic study of the rhetoric of social movements, an understanding of both the interdependence and the independence of theory and history must be made clear. For historians, the explanation of rhetorical behavior in given situations is paramount. For theorists, the nature and functions of movement rhetoric in general is of the highest priority. As R. H. Tawney observed, "all branches of history present enigmas, which only labour can unravel."[37] By recognizing the distinctive nature of their scholarly labors, rhetorical historians and rhetorical theorists can engage in research productive of a deeper understanding of the rhetoric of social movements.

[34] Smith and Windes, p. 142.

[35] Ibid., p. 144.

[36] See James R. Andrews, "The Rhetoric of Coercion and Persuasion: The Reform Bill of 1832," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1970), 187-95.

[37] *The Radical Tradition* (Harmondsworth. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 199.

PROMOTING RADICAL CHANGE IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH: RHETORICAL REQUIREMENTS, PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES OF THE AMERICAN BISHOPS

Carol J. Jablonski

IN this volume and elsewhere, Zarefsky and Simons have exchanged views on whether there are rhetorical requirements, problems and strategies unique to social movements.[1] Zarefsky has countered Simons' claim that the rhetoric of social movements is distinctive by pointing to strategic similarities between insurgent rhetoric and establishment rhetoric and by arguing that differences between the two are merely tactical.

Zarefsky's conclusions seem overly harsh. As long as there are differences, be they strategic or tactical, the rhetoric of social movements will warrant independent study. The restrictive focus of existing theory may be useful, moreover, in defining the larger universe of rhetoric associated with collective change. In both insurgent movements and campaigns by establishment groups, one can discern distinctive organizational and ideological factors that shape rhetoric. To develop a theory that accounts for the rhetorical requirements, problems and strategies that accompany organized efforts to change an established order, we must examine the rhetoric of both bottom-up and top-down campaigns while still recognizing that each group may function within certain rhetorical parameters of its own. Broadening the study of movements in this fashion could better enable us to identify similarities and differences between systems of collective rhetoric.

Despite my concern, Zarefsky's position calls attention to the complex interrelationships between social movement rhetoric and campaigns for change led by institutional authorities. Those who picture social movements as bottom-up collectives tend to minimize the role elites play. The implementation of reformist programs often depends on elites who, in turn, may encounter precarious rhetorical situations in their attempts to promote change within their own institutions. By the same token, those who employ a top-down perspective may overlook problems institutional innovators face in winning support for change from both superiors and subordinates. What constitutes "movement"

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[1] David Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establishment' Movements," *Communication Monographs*, 43 (1977), 352-73; "A Skeptical View of Movement Studies," in this volume. See also Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 1-11; Herbert W. Simons, Elizabeth Mechling, and Howard Schreier, "Mobilizing for Collective Action from the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," in *The Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory*, ed. Carroll C. Arnold and John Waite Bowers (Boston: Allyn and Bacon), in press.

rhetoric is problematic, not because the distinctions between bottom-up and top-down campaigns for reform are invalid, but because so many rhetorical phenomena related to social and institutional change fall between the cracks of these conceptualizations.

Rather than collapsing the distinctions between social movement rhetoric and establishment rhetoric, I propose that we investigate more thoroughly the interactive relationships between the two while paying special attention to the rhetorical requirements, problems and strategies of elites who, in seeking to promote innovations within their own institutions, do not fit either the traditional conceptions of the confrontative grassroots activist or the image of the bureaucratic personality. Institutional innovators must fulfill rhetorical requirements that are implied by the nature of the proposed changes. To initiate and to implement *radical* change, institutional leaders may have to stretch the limits of their authority and risk censure from conservative elements within their own institution, including superiors.[2] At the same time, they may undermine their authority with dissident members.

This essay examines the movement for renewal of the Roman Catholic Church during and after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), with particular reference to the role played by the American bishops as change agents.[3] Vatican II was at once reactive to movements for change that had been smoldering in the Church since the nineteenth century and prophetic of changes that had not yet been proposed.[4] Having been convoked by Pope John XXIII and blessed by the stamp of papal legitimacy, the Council and its directives carried extraordinary authority.[5] Individually and collectively, the American bishops had important roles at the Second Vatican Council and in subsequent efforts to enact the Church's *aggiornamento* in the United States.

In this study, I examine a sample of pastoral letters American Catholic bishops issued to clergy and laity in their respective dioceses between 1962 and 1971.[6] A traditional form of on-

[2] Radical institutional change, in contrast to substitutive change, involves major transformations in institutional paradigms and practices. Whereas substitutive changes are readjustments within institutional systems of thought and action, radical change produces widespread alterations in the institutional structure. See Robert Nisbet, ed., *Social Change* (New York: Harper, 1972), pp. 1-45.

[3] The Council formulated and promulgated sixteen documents. The documents which have had the most visible effects on Catholic thought and practice are those on the liturgy, the Church, the Church in the world, ecumenism, the religious life, the life and ministry of priests, and the lay apostolate. See Austin P. Flunnery, ed., *Documents of Vatican II* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdman, 1975).

[4] See Thomas O'Dea, *The Catholic Crisis* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), pp. 38-39; David O'Brien, *The Renewal of American Catholicism* (New York: Paulist Press, 1972), pp. 51-79. Movements in the twentieth century are examined in James Colaianni, *The Catholic Left: The Crisis of Radicalism Within the Church* (Philadelphia: Chilton, 1968); Edwin Wakin and Father Joseph F. Scheuer, *The De-Romanization of the American Catholic Church* (New York: Macmillan, 1966); John O'Connor, *The People Versus Rome: Radical Split in the American Church* (New York: Random House, 1969).

[5] The authoritative force of ecumenical councils is summarized in the *Catholic Almanac*: "An ecumenical council is an assembly of the college of bishops, with and under the presidency of the pope, which has supreme authority over the Church in matters pertaining to faith, morals, worship and discipline." Felician A. Foy, ed., *1978 Catholic Almanac*, (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 1977), p. 167. Bishops, whose power parallels but never exceeds that of the pope, represent the whole Church when deliberating with an ecumenical council. See *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops* (Ottawa, Ontario: Publication Services of the Canadian Catholic Conference, 1974); John L. McKenzie, *The Roman Catholic Church* (New York: Doubleday Image, 1969), pp. 63-95.

[6] A sample of 115 letters issued between 1947 and 1977 by a variety of bishops formed the data-base for this research. See Carol J. Jablonski, "Institutional Rhetoric and Radical Change: The Case of the Contemporary Roman Catholic Church in America, 1947-1977," Diss. Purdue University, 1979.

going ecclesiastical communication, the pastoral letter also provided a means by which the bishops could define and defend the directives of the Council with Catholics in their own jurisdiction. The rhetoric of the movement for renewal in the Roman Catholic Church was not limited by any means to the bishops' missives. One might also find different rhetorical requirements, problems and strategies operating in messages the bishops exchanged among themselves and with other influential members of the Catholic hierarchy. The focus of this essay, however, is on the rhetorical imperatives of leaders who, in advocating radical change with subordinates, must function both as innovators and as guardians of the established order. Though high in the Church hierarchy, the bishops encountered massive resistance from conservative and liberal Catholics. Many were ambivalent about the proposed changes but were nevertheless cast as change-agents.[7] In responding to demands for change emanating from above and below, these institutional innovators encountered three major obstacles: (1) ideological discontinuity, (2) resistance to innovation, and (3) challenges to institutional authority.

Ideological Discontinuity

When institutions alter their worldviews, redefine the social roles of leaders and members, and reformulate long-standing rules, rites and procedures, one can anticipate a period of turmoil. To be sure, without some crisis in beliefs and values, without some disruption in habitual modes of thought and action, it would be impossible for institutional innovators to effect radical change. Yet unless leaders also provide a mechanism for allaying the uncertainty that accompanies such change, they may lose a portion of their constituencies, or worse, they may invite rebellion.[8] One of the primary tasks of institutional innovators, therefore, is to construct framework within which the discontinuity fomented by radical change can be managed productively.

Theorists of social and institutional change suggest that an optimal conceptual perspective for institutional reform is one that defines change as an extension of—rather than a threat to—the symbolic universe inhabited by the collective. Symbolic universes are comprised of indubitable conceptions that order the totality of personal and collective experience.[9] As such, they shelter individuals from "ultimate terror by bestowing ultimate legitimation upon the protective structures of the institutional order."[10] When alterations in an institution challenge taken-for-granted notions of reality, however, the self-maintaining functions of the symbolic universe may be jeopardized. Institutional affiliates may experience doubt, confusion, and even grief as they part with the security of the past and encounter the vicissitudes of the present.[11]

[7] The use of the term "institutional innovator" for the American bishops requires some qualification. As participants in the sessions of the Vatican Council and as leaders of the movement for renewal in their own dioceses, the bishops clearly functioned as institutional innovators. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that the American bishops were aligned with Catholic liberalism during the years of the Church's *aggiornmento*. The conservativism of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in America is well documented. The historical conditions of the immigrant Catholic community, as well as the political structure underpinning the American Church, have contributed to a hierarchical conservativism that even the Second Vatican Council could not alter significantly. See O'Brien, pp. 51 ff; Wakin and Scheuer, pp. 17-33; O'Connor, p. 183.

[8] See Crane Brinton, *Anatomy of Revolution*, rev. ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), p. 39.

[9] Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), pp. 95-104.

[10] Berger and Luckmann, p. 102.

[11] See, for example, Peter Marris, *Loss and Change* (New York: Anchor, 1975).

Not only must they process new information, they must also integrate that information with values and norms that are themselves undergoing revision. To counteract these effects of radical change, institutional innovators must develop *higher-order* legitimations which, in addition to correcting and elaborating the symbolic universe of the collective, provide for the systemization of current and future reforms.[12]

Leaders of the Roman Catholic Church attempted to construct such an orientation to the changes initiated by the Second Vatican Council. Traditionally, of course, the Church has corrected errors and omissions in the interpretation of doctrine by holding hearings on possible heresies and, from time to time, by convening ecumenical councils which have reformulated Church doctrine. Hence, Roman Catholic leaders could define the mission of the Second Vatican Council as a continuation of the Church's traditional concern for institutional development.

But the Second Vatican Council went one step further. This council, unlike those that preceded it, was concerned primarily with defining the modern Church. Throughout the documents of Vatican II, the Church was defined as an evolving institution, its leaders as agents authorized to direct its *aggiornamento*. Affirming the immutable truths upon which the institution was founded, the Council defined itself as "following in the footsteps" of the Apostles and their successors.[13] As had each previous generation, the Council acknowledged the need to revere sacred tradition. At the same time, it sought to adapt it to current conditions.[14] Thus, the Council expanded the symbolic universe of Roman Catholicism. By calling for an increased sensitivity to temporal affairs affecting the Church, the Fathers of the Council erected a new perspective that was designed both to withstand the scrutiny of generations to come and to create the possibility for continual reform in the Church.

Not surprisingly, the Council's vision of the renewed Church posed conceptual problems for Catholics who had been accustomed to a doctrinally consistent program of religious belief and practice.[15] To facilitate the transition American bishops employed a variety of rhetorical strategies in their pastoral letters. For one thing, they urged Catholics to keep up with the proceedings of the Council. The bishops I studied defined the major obstacles to institutional renewal in American parishes as a lack of knowledge; if Catholics were confused, it was because, as one bishop put it, "they have not done their homework."[16] In addition, the prelates integrated their discussions of the Church's *aggiornamento* with the liturgical cycle that patterns Catholic worship. Because the bishops' pastoral letters were often read aloud at Sunday Mass, the prelates were able to relate their remarks to the particular feast

[12] Berger and Luckmann, pp. 109-16.

[13] These themes are elaborated in the Council's *"Dogmatic Constitution of the Church,"* in Flannery, pp. 373-84.

[14] See the Council's *"Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation,"* Ch. II and III, as well as the preface to *"The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World"* in Flannery, pp. 753-58, 903-11.

[15] Traditional conceptions of Roman Catholicism generated "crystallized institutions of rule and worship; a self-enclosed, traditionally scholastic theology; and, in modern conditions, a posture of defense against the world." Vatican II, however, brought with it a new set of religious practices, an appreciation of historical and critical methods for studying scriptures, and a new spirit of ecumenism. For a detailed account of the Council's impact on Catholic thought and practice, as well as Catholics' responses to those changes, see O'Dea, p. 29ff; Andrew Greeley, *The New Agenda* (New York: Doubleday, 1975); Raymond E. Brown, *Biblical Reflections on Crisis Facing the Church* (New York: Paulist Press, 1975).

[16] Bishop James Malone, Youngstown, Ohio, February 1, 1970.

being celebrated and could thus meld their listeners' perceptions of institutional change with familiar lines of exegetical argumentation.

In their missives, the bishops used several strategies to reinforce the authority of the Council and their allegiance to its directives. One was to link the proceedings of Vatican II with earlier Councils. Another was to provide testimony from the popular Pope John XXIII, who had initiated the Church's renewal upon election to the papacy. Yet another was to quote scriptures in support of the Council's directives. As the Church moved into the 1970's, however, the prelates all but abandoned the use of scriptural testimony and cited the documents of Vatican II instead. This developmental pattern in the bishops' rhetoric suggests that institutional continuity in times of radical change can be fostered by staged strategies of instruction. By citing scriptural references in abundance during the early years of the Church's renewal, the prelates enlarged their audience's knowledge of the rationale for institutional reform. Having done so, they could later rely on the conciliar documents to explain and to justify specific directives for renewal.[17] Beyond that, the bishops' use of testimony indicates that the prelates were concerned with establishing themselves as loyal proponents of the changes demanded by the Vatican. By subordinating their own authority to that of the scriptures and the conciliar documents, the bishops projected a public image that was consistent with the demands of their office as defined by Church doctrine and reinforced by the Church hierarchy.[18]

Resistance to Innovation

Besides managing the discontinuity generated by radical change, institutional innovators must motivate members to adopt their programs of reform. When confronted with the need to change habitual modes of thought and action, members of established orders may question whether the changes will increase or diminish the symbolic and material resources previously available to them. They may not perceive a need to abandon familiar principles and practices, or they may resent the general disorder that accompanies the implementation of institutional reforms. Consequently, institutional innovators must undermine support for obsolete attitudes and behaviors and, when necessary, confront members with the negative effects of recalcitrance. Moreover, innovators must provide inducements for change while assuring listeners that the innovations will be implemented successfully.[19]

Throughout the process of change, leaders must also be responsive to the developing needs of the collective. To begin with, individuals may find it difficult to maintain new patterns of behavior—either because the design of the innovation is flawed, or because the behaviors are themselves hard to master. Furthermore, members already committed to change may become frustrated with what they see as limited, sluggish, or inconsistent phases of implementation. Thus, leaders must respond to these disparate types of members.[20]

[17] The conciliar documents were published shortly after each session concluded; thus, the bishops had the option of citing them in their letters during the mid 1960's.

[18] The bishops' critics argued that by emphasizing doctrinal consistency as a major rhetorical imperative, the prelates seemed to avoid addressing the demands for change emanating from the bottom-up. Unless institutional innovators also appear to be cognizant of arguments for change emanating from sources other than the institutional hierarchy, they may risk being perceived as ineffectual or inconsistent in their reformist roles.

[19] Goodwin Watson, "Resistance to Change," in *Processes and Phenomena of Social Change*, ed. Gerald Zaltman (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), pp. 117-31.

[20] Gerald Zaltman, Robert Duncan and Jonny

Catholic bishops in America sought to deal with their audience's opposition to innovation during the height of the Church's transition. Unlike the letters the prelates had penned in the 1950's, the missives issued during the late 1960's exuded a positive attitude toward the times, expressed confidence in the aspirations of lay Catholics for renewal, and tempered demands for absolute obedience to authority. Perhaps the most telling indication of the bishops' sensitivity to motivational needs came in the letters heralding the onset of Lent. Traditionally, Lent had been perceived by Church leaders as an especially dreary season of repentence. In their Lenten messages of the 1960's, however, the bishops fostered a more balanced attitude toward Lenten observances. One bishop, for example, suggested that while some of the old forms of Lenten penance may be outdated, Catholics might be able to invent more suitable practices on their own.[21] Another prelate claimed that one way Catholics could demonstrate repentance was to encourage open communication among members of different races and creeds.[22]

On matters of liturgical reform, the bishops seemed equally positive. "I am confident," one wrote, "that all the faithful will respond to [the new liturgy] with enthusiasm. . . . We are all privileged to be living in this wonderful era of ecclesial self-examination of purpose and dynamic renewal."[23] Admonishing those who were reluctant to embrace the reforms to grow in faith and love, he also cautioned those who would over-react to liturgical renewal and abuse the Mass. The challenges facing Catholics, he wrote, were "a monumental work, which will set the pattern of ecclesiology for the next century. It must not be done precipitously."[24]

Overall, Church leaders seemed intent on including a joyful obedience to the directives of the Second Vatican Council. Although their messages often reminded Catholics of the Church's authority to initiate and to implement change, they rarely struck a defensive posture with recalcitrant Catholics. Rather, the prelates sought to construct a psychologically and intellectually compelling set of arguments and appeals for change. This strategy had the added advantage of compensating for the bishops' diminished authority with Catholic audiences.

Challenges to Authority

Radical institutional change forces the issue of authority at a time when institutional authority is most precarious. When a collective alters its world-view, members may re-evaluate their conceptions of the hierarchy as a legitimate ruling body. Vatican II actually encouraged such a re-evaluation by urging the laity to become more active in the ecclesiastical affairs of the Church. In many respects, to become a renewed Catholic was to become a questioning Catholic.

Institutional authority may be undermined further if members are dissatisfied with the scope of the reforms and the manner in which they are implemented. Members who are frustrated or discouraged by the institution's renewal may reduce their discomfort by blaming the leadership for innovations and for incompetence in implementing them. Those unwilling to comply with leaders' prescriptions for change may

Holbeck, *Innovations and Organizations* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), pp. 58-104.

[21] Bishop Gerald O'Keefe, Davenport, Iowa, February 1, 1967.

[22] Archbishop Philip Hannon, New Orleans, Louisiana, February 7, 1969.

[23] Bishop Russell McVinney, Providence, Rhode Island, January 9, 1966.

[24] McVinney.

justify their disobedience by denying that the institution is empowered to govern with absolute authority. The Church of the 1960's and 1970's witnessed such challenges to authority in the exodus of clergy from the ministry and in the open dissent of members who contested the bishops' controversial statements on contraception and liturgical reform.[25]

In responding to such problems, the bishops were often caught between conflicting poles. As guardians of the faith, they were in a protective, even defensive position. Yet as proponents of the alterations set in motion by the Second Vatican Council, they were obliged to rally support for reform. While Catholic activists felt that the bishops' effusive rhetoric about the new "People of God" belied their efforts to inhibit and to control lay participation in the Church, the bishops pondered the erosion of their authority.[26] Under fire from the Vatican to contain abuses of the Church's reforms, the bishops were forced to take a more reserved posture toward change as the 1960's drew to a close.

In constructing their postconciliar messages, the bishops struck a careful apologetic posture. Although they did not relinquish their role as authoritative proponents of Catholic doctrine, neither did they threaten to excommunicate wayward listeners. Given that the bishops' preconciliar missives often commanded obedience on the basis of authoritative appeals, the prelates' recent efforts to console and, indeed, to court listeners who might otherwise defect from the Church stand out as striking examples of how institutional leaders can respond to challenges to their authority.

As I observed earlier, the bishops' rhetoric reflected a greater dependency on scriptural references during the 1960's and early 1970's. We noted, too, that the bishops often called forth positive themes in attempting to overcome their audience's resistance to innovation. Besides providing Catholics with an expanded set of instructional and motivational arguments, the bishops attempted to induce compliance on grounds other than those established by Church authority and tradition. Scriptural sources could offset disaffection listeners felt toward the Church-as-institution. Moreover, appeals based on themes of hope and love could reach faithful and lapsed Catholics alike, since they tap into a higher order of religious valuing than that embodied in appeals to Church authority and tradition. Moreover, by constructing such compensatory rhetorical strategies, the bishops could enhance their own credibility, albeit indirectly. In proclaiming the scriptures more frequently in their missives, the bishops enacted their primary roles as agents of the Word without calling attention to the controversy over their teaching authority. When they elaborated abiding Christian ideals, the Church leaders associated themselves with cherished values and, thus, may have increased their own rhetorical authority.

Although the crisis in authority in the Roman Catholic Church was not

[25] See, for example William A. Osborne, "Religious and Ecclesiastical Reform: The Contemporary Catholic Experience in the United States," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 7 (1968), 78-86; Andrew Greeley, William McCready, and Kathleen McCourt, *Catholic Schools in a Declining Church* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1976); H. Theodore Groat, Arthur G. Neal, and Evelyn Knisely, "Contraceptive Nonconformity Among Catholics," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 14 (1975), 367-77.

[26] See Douglas Roche, "The Challenge to Authority in the Catholic Church, in *American Mosaic: Social Patterns of Religion in the United States*, ed. Phillip E. Hammon and Benton Johnson (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 95; William Meissner, *The Assault on Authority: Dialogue or Dilemma?* (New York: Orbis, 1971).

offset entirely by the bishops' rhetoric, it is significant that they attempted to balance their commitments to the demands of their office with the needs of their audience. By upholding the authority of the Church and by establishing an expanded set of arguments for compliance to the directives of Vatican II, the bishops were at least able to contain the resistance of many American Catholics to Church authority. As Andrew Greeley's study of contemporary American Catholicism suggests, if today's Catholic does not always feel obligated to conform to ecclesiastical authority, he or she still may embrace the principles and practices of the Church.[27] The bishops may not have quelled Catholic disobedience altogether, but they have been successful in avoiding major schisms within the Catholic community.

Conclusion

This study suggests that useful distinctions may be drawn between insurgent rhetoric and the rhetoric of establishment campaigns for change. Additionally, it underscores the need to develop theory that accounts for the rhetorical requirements, problems and strategies of elites seeking to promote innovations within their own institutions.

Whether radical change is fomented by establishment leaders or by insurgents, it seems clear that reformers must construct a rhetoric of legitimation. That rhetoric, however, is shaped by factors that are peculiar to the collective under scrutiny. In bottom-up programs of change, leaders must create a rhetoric of discontinuity to establish the legitimacy of the collective's grievances as well as the need to induce changes from the outside. Whereas insurgent leaders must call attention to the confrontative and divisive character of their action, institutional innovators must defuse potential conflict by proclaiming the value of purposeful—and authorized—institutional change. Indeed, institutional innovators must create a semblance of continuity within which major alterations in institutional philosophies and practices may be viewed as attempts to perfect and to perpetuate the institutional order.

At the same time, however, institutional innovators encounter special rhetorical requirements and problems when confronted with conflicting demands for change. Sometimes, institutional innovators must temper their own conservativism in order to embark on programs of radical change. Clearly, some of the bishops I studied were engaged in self-persuasion as they attempted to overcome the resistance of recalcitrant members. By the same token, institutional innovators may need to mediate between superiors who wish to slow down the course of change and subordinates who hope to accelerate it.

[27] *The American Catholic: A Social Portrait* (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

THE HISTORICAL CRITICISM OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Ralph R. Smith

DIVERSITY in the study of social movement rhetoric is inescapable and encouraging. Researchers have posed many different questions concerning efforts to achieve social change through symbolic action: What is the relationship of movement ideology to a culturally determined world view? How do organizational imperatives influence message content? Are there language characteristics common to movements? What are the important similarities and differences among movements in various societies and historical periods? What standards should be used to judge movement rhetoric?

Answers to these and related questions require different ways of collecting data and drawing inferences. To achieve informed judgment of the rhetoric of a social movement, the critic must be familiar with constructs from sociology, psychology, history and literary criticism. A growing awareness of the interdisciplinary nature of movement criticism is evident in the literature touched on in this essay.

A paradigm has not yet been discovered which allows critics to synthesize approaches of various disciplines into a single critical method. We have, however, advanced to the point where each school of social movement critics should assess what it might learn from the others. Given my commitment to the historical approach, this essay concerns the ways historical critics might contribute to social scientific and dramatistic analysis and with the ways historical criticism might be enriched by these newer perspectives.

In general, historical critics value the insights which can be gained from a disciplined effort to describe a sequence of past events and to establish the context, causes and consequences of connected occurrences. Whether examining a single movement spokesman or an ideology espoused by many movements over a period of centuries, the historical critic strives to reconstruct the past to reveal a meaningful pattern of sequential events. Four particular questions about the historical criticism of movement rhetoric will be discussed in this essay: What is the current status of the historical approach to the study of social movement discourse? What contributions to the historical study of movements are offered by social scientific and dramatistic critics? What contributions might rhetorical historians make to these other perspectives? What should be the agenda for the historical study of movement rhetoric?

The Historical Stance Toward Movement Rhetoric

Working historians in any field would tend to agree with Isaiah Berlin that there is "no a priori shortcut to knowledge of the past; what actually happened can only be established by scrupulous empirical investigation."[1]

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1 "History and Theory: The Concept of Scientific History." *Generalizations in Historical*

This is not to imply that the facts arrange themselves. Assumptions about the nature and structures of data are necessary since, "without division of time, groupings of men, aggregates of ideas, the historian would be reduced to unreadable, unrememberable prose."[2] In selecting appropriate means of generalizing, historiographers range on a continuum from those who believe that historical writing cannot move beyond limited commonsense propositions to those who employ retrodictive social models. Historians of movement rhetoric tend toward the commonsense pole and seek to provide a pattern for presenting data while avoiding specification of covering laws for the interpretation of that data. They have proposed the sort of schemes which Hughes describes as a "fitting of the pieces of historical data into an organized form in terms of process or structure."[3]

Two tendencies in the historical approach to movement rhetoric are to define the movement as the primary unit of study and to orient research suggestions toward generalized taxonomies or matrices which organize data. Griffin, for example, assumes that the primary goal of a movement study is analysis of *a* movement. From this assumption he derives the stricture that the student should examine movements which have few members and are of short duration.[4] Lucas continues in the tradition by calling for more studies "dealing holistically with the rhetoric of individual movements from inception through consummation."[5]

With attention directed at the single movement, the most pressing historiographical question focuses on what is important to observe in the movement. Griffin provides a taxonomy of movement types, stages and channels of communication.[6] Andrews draws attention to context, to a particular class of events, and to outcomes. In this process of pattern formation, there is an effort to make of movement study a special kind of history, one which focuses on symbolic action as a determinant of behavior. In Andrews' terms, the historical critic must assess the "impact of events-as-perceived on the course of history. . . . What becomes relevant is not so much historical forces trends, or even specific events; relevance for historical critics depends on popular interpretation of phenomena."[7] For Lucas, the special task of the rhetorical analyst is to explicate the "ways rhetoric helps to propel the movement from stage to stage, or to retard its development."[8]

Another less apparent characteristic of the historical approach to movement rhetoric is an absence of assertions about determinative relationships. Historical critics have charted sequences of events and asserted probable causation in specific cases, but they have not generalized about antecedent conditions which, if present, must lead to defined effects. For example, a particular movement may have crushed because of factionalization, lack of access to media at crucial junctures, and failure of the movement's proponents to use appro-

Writing, ed. Alexander V. Riasanovsky and Barnes Riznik (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1963), p. 110.

[2] Jacques Barzun and Henry Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harcourt-Brace, Jovanovich, 1977), p. 149.

[3] H. Stuart Hughes, "The Historian and the Social Scientist," *American Historical Review*, 66 (1960), 26.

[4] Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (1952), 184-88.

[5] Stephen E. Lucas, *Portents of Rebellion* (Philadelphia: Temple Univ. Press, 1976), p. xx.

[6] Griffin.

[7] James R. Andrews, "The Passionate Negation: The Chartist Movement in Rhetorical Perspective," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 196-98, 207-08.

[8] Lucas, p. xx.

priate suasory tactics. Such a claim, daring enough for the historian, does not lead to the generalization that these conditions are necessary or sufficient to defeat a movement. As Berlin notes, a predictive model is "conspicuously absent in normal historical writing, if only because the general propositions out of which it must be constructed . . . turn out to be impossible to specify."[9]

Implications of Social Science for the Historical Critic

Historical critics are interested in concepts which improve their understanding of the past. There is no question that historians look to social scientists for such concepts. My narrower concern, however, is with what rhetorical critics working in the historical tradition can learn about social movement discourse from rhetorical theorists who have been influenced by the social sciences.

The general goals and ideal methods of the social scientist should not be confused with the specific adaptations which rhetorical theorists have made of social scientific approaches to social movements. Wilson, for instance, defines the goal and method of the social scientist with respect to movements. The goal is "to describe how the metamorphosis from one form to another takes place and explain in lawlike terms its causes and consequences." The social scientist "looks for regularities in the occurrence of the phenomena and attempts to relate these to conditions surrounding that occurrence."[10] Rhetorical theorists have not proposed "lawlike terms;" nor have they explored a wide range of movement discourse to document regularities in communication behavior. They have, however, chosen explanatory constructs from the social sciences which have important implications for the ways historical critics choose subjects, generalize about discourse, and explain causal relationships. Three recent articles by Simons, Leathers, and Bormann clearly illustrate these implications.

Simons has inferred from organizational theory the rhetorical requirements for movement leaders.[11] Explanation of one domain of social structure by theory appropriate to another domain is justified by the claim that "any movement . . . must fulfill the same functional requirements as more formal collectivities." Specifically, social movement leaders must create an efficient organization, achieve adoption of social change, and resist pressure from the established order. These imperatives are frequently in conflict. For example, the desire of members for participatory control may, if acceded to by the leadership, result in disorganization, which prevents effective resistance to authority. To respond to these conflicting demands, leaders can adopt militant, moderate, or intermediate strategies. How well leaders perform can be judged by their success in employing strategies which solve rhetorical problems arising from conflicting imperatives.

This leader-centered theory of persuasion provides the historical critic with another set of categories for organizing information. Explanation can proceed from specific conflicts between rhetorical requirements through particular strategic choices to assessment of whether rhetorical problems were reduced or resolved. Historical critics may find such a plan valuable for at least two reasons.

[9] Berlin, p. 109.

[10] John Wilson, *Introduction to Social Movements* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 4, 6.

[11] Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion in Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 1-11.

First, "rhetorical requirements" can be warranted with reference to social theory. This represents an advance over the arbitrary commonsense categories of traditional historical criticism. For example, how can one dispute whether data about movements can best be divided into chronological categories of inception, crisis and consummation? Such a division is based on convenience, not general principles. In contrast, theory-grounded categories provide terms for reasoned discussion of whether a particular set of generalizations explains the dynamics of movement development.

Second, the rhetorical requirements approach to describing movements does provide the historical critic with a more specific means of comparing the rhetoric of various movements. By isolating leadership behavior as a component in social action, and by specifying the general conditions to which leaders must respond, Simons' pattern allows the historical critic to compare different sets of choices under theoretically similar circumstances. Strategic decisions made by Jewish militants responding to Roman rule in the first century A.D. become conceptually comparable to decisions of nineteenth-century anarcho-syndicalists.

Historical critics will not find a predictive theory in the leader-centered approach. Specific outcomes cannot be forecast, and the theory cannot be rigorously tested against individual cases. A systematic concept of rhetorical requirements can, however, place the historical critic in a "better position to bring his own sensitivity and imagination to bear on analyses of particular movements."[12]

Leathers has proposed a psychological approach to movement criticism. He has inferred the cause of the "unique properties" of reactionary rhetoric from Rokeach's theory of the belief-disbelief system of the closed mind.[13] He claims that the theory allows development of a "conceptually unified explanation of *why* reactionary rhetoric has developed in its current, distinctive form." This claim is developed through three propositions. First, the "reactionary has the belief-disbelief system characteristic of the closed mind." Reactionaries consistently and absolutely reject disbeliefs, completely separate beliefs and disbeliefs, and fail to distinguish among their different disbeliefs. Thus, the reactionary perceives communism as an absolute evil utterly opposed to free enterprise and identical with every variant of socialism. Second, the "closed belief system structures the reactionary message in a very distinctive way." The rhetoric of the radical right concentrates on denying disbeliefs: "Almost invariably the reactionary attacks the beliefs of others rather than supporting his own." Third, the "reactionary belief system results in a persuasive mesasge which is anti-empirical, asocial, and ahistorical." Facts, the opinions of others, and reported trends in society are all rejected. Truth is to be found only in the ideology of the movement.

Leathers' formulation provides several theoretical sets of categories for historical critics. Movements can be classified according to the psychological state of its participants as revealed in discourse. Movement types might be distinguished by the degree to which they produce messages rejecting competing beliefs. Further, a movement's successes and failures can be attributed partly to the

[12] Simons, p. 2.

[13] Dale G. Leathers, "Belief-Disbelief Systems: The Communicative Vacuum of the Radical Right," *Explorations in Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Gerald P. Mohrmann, Charles J. Stewart, and Donovan J. Ochs (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1973), pp. 124-37.

ability of leaders to generate messages appropriate to the mental characteristics of the target audience. Last, historical critics can systematically infer cause from evidence to be found in discourse. When a movement's appeals display close-minded charactertistics, then the claim might be advanced, on one level of analysis, that the movement is the result of a collaborative style of perceiving and acting.

In comparison to Simons' stress on organizational imperatives and Leathers' emphasis on psychodynamics, Bormann brings attention to the conditions produced by group interaction and the influence of these conditions on verbal behavior. Bormann has extended one category of Bales' system for classifying group interaction.[14] Bales notes that a member of a group can verbalize about events outside the "here-and-now" reality of the group's situation. Other members can take up the "fantasy theme," which, given appropriately disposed members, can "chain out" through the group. Bormann argues that such fantasies can reach beyond the small group to become the substance of movement rhetoric. "A rhetorical movement contains small group fantasy chains, public fantasy events, and a rhetorical vision in a complex and reciprocal set of relationships." In the development of a social movement,

> [a] small group of people with similar psychodynamics meet to discuss a common preoccupation or problem. A member dramatizes a theme that catches the group and causes it to chain out because it hits a common psychodynamic chord. . . . If the group's fantasy themes contain motives to "go public" and gain converts to their position they often begin to artistically create messages.

Through these messages, audiences are caught up in fantasy themes which chain out in new groups until a sufficiently large public is created to validate the movement's vision.

Bormann's approach to movement rhetoric directs the historical critic toward description of the processes by which fantasy themes develop in groups and penetrate through an entire society. Such an approach focuses the historical critic's developmental view of movements as an interplay of social situation and symbolic action. If the characteristics of evolving groups shape discourse, then the historical critic can compare groups and their messages in order to determine systematically the group variables which influence the creation and dissemination of movement discourse.

Implications of Dramatism for the Historical Critic

A dramatistic approach to movement rhetoric has emerged to compete with the historical and social scientific approaches. The proposition has been advanced that, in important respects, dramatism is incompatible with the other two approaches. For example, Cathcart argues from Burkean premises that historical and sociological definitions of movements are "ill-suited to the formulation of an adequate theory of movements."[15] But this incompatibility, to the extent that it exists at all, does not appear to extend so far that dramatism cannot enrich the critical historiography of social movements. Griffin's interpretative application of Burkean formulas to movement rhetoric provides valuable clues to dramatism's potential contribution.[16]

[14] Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy, Rhetoric and Social Reality," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 58 (1972), 396-407.

[15] Robert S. Cathcart, "New Approaches to the Study of Movements: Defining Movements Rhetorically," *Western Speech*, 36 (1972), 82-88.

[16] Leland M. Griffin, "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke*, ed. William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), pp. 456-78.

Griffin begins by stating that language dominates human behavior. "Man is a being who lives by language; who moves and is moved by words; who rises and is redeemed, or fails and falls through words." Relationships in language provide the dramatic structure of collective action, the necessary progression in movement development from "Order, Guilt, and the Negative, through Victimage and Mortification, to Catharsis and Redemption." At each step, language is crucial as both cause of collective action and indicator of the agents' attitudes. Language makes striving after order necessary and provides the "understanding essential to the ultimate achievement of integration." Misuse of symbols signals error in the order. "And thus a 'good' order may turn faulty; and the symptom of its turning is the growth of verbal corruption." Guilt is an essential part of inevitable corruption, of "error, or the yearning to err, in the use of symbols." Movements arising out of guilt begin with "enactment of the Negative, . . . [which] is in essence the announcement of a stand, a 'standing together,' an understanding." Victimage and mortification are a rhetorical killing "in the order of murder, when the converted rise up, in the arena of their minds, and negate the contradictions of the countermovement." Catharsis occurs through the public expression of rejection of the standing order. Redemption is achieved in a period of consummation when individuals "slay the 'Vile beasts' that arise in their minds; negate, and thus kill, the errant symbols within."

The symbolic pattern of collective action which Griffin describes may not account for the actual sequence of events in the majority of reform and revolutionary movements. The evolution of a movement can be influenced by many contingencies arising outside the movement. However, Griffin's interpretation of dramatism may help historical critics in two important respects. First, rhetorical analysts must account for the statements of movement participants. If the cycle of guilt, rejection and elation which Griffin specifies does not reflect the untidy sequence of events, it may describe a more neatly structured interior world of expectations. Scholars examining letters, diaries, committee reports and public declarations might discover that verbalized perceptions do obey Burke's linguistic "Iron Law of History/That Welds Order and Sacrifice."[17] Second, rhetorical analysts may find in dramatism a tentative guide for interpreting the controlling assumptions of historians.

The perceptions of historians of social movements may be dominated by an abstract model of what constitutes collective action. Hence, narrative accounts may be shaped to fit an idealization of movements as efforts marshaling the most profound human feelings in the cause of a new order. Perhaps, Griffin provides a beginning toward understanding the language of a rhetoric of history in which movements are described and judged largely in comparison to a logically consistent image of total revolution. Specifically, the western imagination has been excited by the French and Russian Revolutions. Rhetorical analysts may discover that historians have carried over the dramatistic terms useful for capturing the spirit of these total revolutions to collective efforts such as civil rights protests and other reform movements which do not promote overthrow of an existing order.

Implications of Historical Criticism for Rhetorical Theory

Rhetoricians should not lightly dismiss

[17] Cited by Griffin, "Dramatistic Theory," p. 457.

the possibility that the chief function of historical criticism is to give intellectual pleasure. The critic and the reader can enjoy new interpretations, encounters with dramatic situations, recognition of contemporary "novel" ideas as ancient notions. Nor ought the historical critic to abandon entirely the belief that history teaches through an examination of precedent. However, the theme of this discussion is not history as literature or lesson, but as an exploration in the dynamics of movement rhetoric. In this connection, the most important function of historical criticism is the validation of concepts which are created by other rhetorical critics.

My suggestion does not imply that historians cannot generate concepts of their own. However, powerful theories have been advanced by social scientific and dramatistic critics. These concepts contain claims more definite than the loosely woven generalizations of historians. Since movements cannot be duplicated in laboratories, these claims must be tested against case studies. In executing such studies, historical critics are valuable participants because of their knowledge of the milieu in which particular collective events occur, their sense of the interaction of political, social, economic and rhetorical forces, and their skill in evaluating documentary evidence.

Historical research can confirm and refine rhetorical theories. For example, the leader-centered theory of persuasion might be elaborated by examining the clash among "incompatible" demands in different historical periods. Perhaps the importance of each requirement varies across time. Since Simons draws evidence primarily from contemporary anti-authoritarian movements, he understandably emphasizes the conflict of membership needs and demands with other organizational requirements. Historians might examine whether such conflicts are as significant in movements which want to change authorities but not the nature of authority itself. The need of movements to be well organized might be less pressing when, as has been the case during wars and in the third world, the established power structure is itself poorly organized.

Similarly, a psychological theory of reactionary rhetoric can be tested in a variety of ways, one of which is through examination of non-contemporary resistance efforts. Have reactionary spokesmen for movements demanding restoration of a monarchy, re-establishment of a church, or re-imposition of slavery displayed similar rhetorical characteristics? The approach which Leathers recommends would be greatly strengthened if it explained movements outside the orbit of the American radical right. In like manner, the explanatory power of fantasy theme analysis might be demonstrated by describing specific originating groups and by tracing the development of rhetorical visions through time and across groups. Last, the pattern of assertions which constitute dramatistic analysis can be tested by observations of the shifting attitudes within movements. Does a sense of guilt give way to demands for vengeance and a willingness to be martyred? Do successful movements terminate in a re-establishment of perceived communal harmony?

In contributing to the process of theory testing, historical critics can be passive organizers of documentary materials, leaving to theorists the task of constructing high-level concepts. Without disparaging this traditional approach, an objection to it should be noted. Historical critics operating outside an explicit theoretical framework may produce only a fog of confused terms, unspecified observational methods

and idiosyncratic literary styles impenetrable by other critics. We cannot, however, expect every historical critic to master the complexities of social psychology and literary criticism. Perhaps historical critics will discover a productive middle course either by centering research around a particular theoretical construct, or by making clear the theoretical implications of specific specific research.[18]

Suggestions for Further Explorations in Historical Criticism

While history as a literary art should not be bound to a specific set of research goals, historical critics might consider working away from a research tradition which emphasizes the study of single movements in the United States and Great Britain. Efforts in this direction might take a variety of forms: examination of a single theme which has appeared in a number of movements over a considerable period of time; description of movements which have occurred outside of Anglo-American culture; comparison of several conceptually similar movements which have occurred in varying historical circumstances. Historical critics should continue to explore the motivating power of symbols and the interaction of symbols with objective reality. In various historical situations, movements have provided symbols for coordinating effort within the cause and for subverting accepted reality. By charting the variations in these vocabularies of motive, the range of social movement world views, strategies, and influence might come into focus more clearly.[19] As a result of undertaking comparative studies of the rhetoric of social movements, historical critics will move toward a better understanding not only of individual movements, but also of the rhetorical causes, continuity and consequences of collective action.

[18] Russel R. Windes and I attempted the former task in two articles: "The Innovational Movement: A Rhetorical Theory," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 140-53; "The Rhetoric of Mobilization: Implications for the Study of Movements," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 42 (1976), 1-19.

[19] Michael Calvin McGee has recently proposed a potentially useful means of examining social vocabulary. See "The 'Ideograph': A Link Between Rhetoric and Ideology," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66 (1980), 1-16.

A FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO THE RHETORIC OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Charles J. Stewart

LELAND M. GRIFFIN concluded his pioneering essay, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," by envisioning a time when "from the identification of a number of rhetorical patterns, we may discover the various configurations of public discussion, whether rhetorical patterns repeat themselves when like movements occur in the intervals of time, whether a consistent set of forms may be said to exist."[1] Although scholars have produced many studies since Griffin's essay, little progress has been made toward the goals of understanding the nature of social movement rhetoric and of constructing generalizations that apply to different movements in different periods.[2]

Several factors have contributed to our failure. First, we have been preoccupied with explicating the events (Selma, Columbia University, Wounded Knee), the people (Martin Luther King, Jr., Stokely Carmichael, Jerry Rubin), and the strategies (civil disobedience, confrontation, obscenity) that have captured headlines and intruded upon our world.[3] Second, we have employed microscopic approaches that substantially limit studies in proportion to the amount of rhetoric that social movements produce.[4] Many studies have offered valuable insights into specific events, speeches, and strategies, but they have contributed little to generalizations about the rhetoric of social movements. Third, social movements have proved to be elusive phenomena that vary in purpose, size, structure, membership, stages of development, and degree of change desired.[5]

An approach that seems most promising for making significant strides toward

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[1] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (1952), 188.

[2] For an excellent review, see Herbert W. Simons, Elizabeth Mechling, and Howard Schreier, "Functions of Communication in Mobilizing for Collective Action from the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," in *Handbook on Rhetorical and Communication Theory*, ed. Carroll C. Arnold and John W. Bowers (Boston: Allyn and Bacon), in press.

[3] See James R. Andrews, "Confrontation at Columbia: A Case Study of Coercive Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (1969), 9-16; Thomas W. Benson and Bonnie M. D. Johnson, "The Rhetoric of Resistance: Confrontation with the Warmakers, Washington, D.C., October 1967," *Today's Speech*, 16 (1968), 35-42; Wayne E. Brockriede and Robert L. Scott, "Stokely Carmichael: Two Speeches on Black Power," *Central States Speech Journal*, 19 (1968), 3-13; Donald H. Smith, "Martin Luther King, Jr.: In the Beginning at Montgomery," *Southern Speech Journal*, 34 (1968), 8-17; Robert L. Scott and Donald K. Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (1969), 1-8; Mary G. McEdwards, "Agitative Rhetoric: Its Nature and Effect," *Western Speech*, 32 (1968), 36-43.

[4] See Finlev C. Campbell, "Voices of Thunder, Voices of Rage: A Symbolic Analysis of a Selection from Malcolm X's 'Message to the Grass Roots,'" *Speech Teacher*, 19 (1970), 101-10; Bernard J. Brommel, "The Pacifist Speechmaking of Eugene V. Debs," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 52 (1966), 146-54.

[5] See William B. Cameron, *Modern Social Movements* (New York: Random House, 1966); Leland M. Griffin, "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke*, ed. William Rueckert (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969); Roberta Ash, *Social Movements in America* (Chicago: Markham, 1972); C. A. Dawson and W. E. Gettys, *Introduction to Sociology* (New York: Ronald Press, 1935); Rudolph Heberle, *Social Movements: An Introduction to Political Sociology* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1951).

Griffin's vision is one viewing rhetoric as the primary *agency* through which social movements perform necessary *functions* that enable them to come into existence, to meet opposition, and, perhaps, to succeed in bringing about (or resisting) change. Functions are indispensable processes that contribute to the furtherance or maintenance of social movements.[6] A functional approach views rhetoric not as art, artifact, or the manipulation of techniques for specific effects but as the agency through which social movements perform essential functions. It is macroscopic in application, treating rhetorical efforts with broad brushstrokes, and thus is more capable than traditional microscopic approaches of contributing to our understanding of the immense rhetorical canvasses produced by a bewildering array of social movements.

The notion of a *functional* approach to the study of social movement rhetoric has appeared in several essays. For example, Richard B. Gregg explored the ego-function of protest rhetoric.[7] Dale G. Leathers observed that the rhetorical strategy of the John Birch Society "was highly functional for the maintenance of in-group solidarity."[8] And Michael McGee concluded his essay, "In Search of 'The People': A Rhetorical Alternative," by suggesting that the "analysis of rhetorical documents should not turn inward, to an appreciation of persuasive, manipulative techniques, but outward to *functions* of rhetoric."[9]

Herbert W. Simons and Bruce E. Gronbeck have provided both theoretical bases for a functional approach and lists of functions that might serve as guides for the study of social movement rhetoric. In his effort to provide a "leader-centered conception of persuasion in social movements," Simons wrote that social movements "must fulfill the same functional requirements as more formal collectivities. These imperatives constitute *rhetorical requirements* for the leadership of a movement."[10] He discussed these functions or requirements under three broad headings:

1. They must attract, maintain, and mold workers (i.e., followers) into an efficiently organized unit.
2. They must secure adoption of their product by the larger structure (i.e., the external system, the established order).
3. They must react to resistance generated by the larger structure.

In a more recent essay, Simons et al. reiterated the value of a functional approach to the rhetoric of social movements, discussed three broad rhetorical functions (mobilization, exercise of external influence, and resistance to counter-influence), and identified functions instrumental to accomplishment of these tasks:

1. Justifying the movement's mission to its constituents and to third parties
2. Infusing the mission with a sense of urgency
3. Acquiring material and nonmaterial resources
4. Organizing activists into a disciplined and cohesive unit
5. Gratifying constituents' personal needs
6. Selling to or imposing upon the movement's targets its program for action
7. Discrediting oppositions
8. Countering efforts at social control.[11]

In "The Rhetoric of Social-Institutional Change: Black Action at

[6] This definition was developed from a discussion of the meaning of the term function in Robert K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, 2d ed. (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957), pp. 19-25.

[7] "The Ego-Function of the Rhetoric of Protest," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 4 (1971), 71-91.

[8] "The Rhetorical Strategy of the New Right Movement," unpublished paper presented at the annual convention of the Speech Communication Association, 1972.

[9] *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 248.

[10] "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 1-11.

[11] Simons, Mechling, and Schreier.

Michigan," Bruce E. Gronbeck discussed social-psychological, political-institutional, philosophical-ideological, and rhetorical forces operant in times of social-institutional change, and concluded: "Rhetorical forces function as a set of skills able to create, sustain, and terminate movements by uniting the other forces." The rhetorical analyst, according to Gronbeck, should ask three questions: (1) What functions are fulfilled by rhetorical discourse? (2) With what substance are these functions fulfilled? (3) And, in what form does that substance appear? Gronbeck listed six rhetorical functions and applied them to the Black Action Movement at the University of Michigan in the spring of 1970:

1. Defining: Somebody or some group takes the first step. A problem is defined and a solution is urged.
2. Legitimizing: Legitimizers can lend positive authority, a regional or national presence to a budding movement.
3. In-gathering: The movement builds a power base, a group of adherents ready to talk, march, and fight for the cause.
4. Pressuring: The movement also mounts a campaign urging reform or revolution.
5. Compromising: After direct confrontation, usually some sort of compromise must be worked out.
6. Satisfying: Leaders must be able to return to the masses of their movement, proclaiming victory, even if only partial gains have been made.[12]

Each of these functions is identified with a particular stage of social movement development as prescribed by Griffin: defining and legitimizing with the inception phase, in-gathering and pressuring with the rhetorical crisis phase, and compromising and satisfying with the consummation phase.[13]

Building on the foundations laid by previous writers, I delineate the following scheme of general and specific functions that rhetorical analysis may employ in systematic studies of social movement rhetoric:

1. Transforming Perceptions of History
   a. Altering perceptions of the past
   b. Altering perceptions of the present
   c. Altering perceptions of the future
2. Transforming Perceptions of Society
   a. Altering perceptions of the opposition
   b. Altering self-perceptions
3. Prescribing Courses of Action
   a. Prescribing what must be done
   b. Prescribing who must accomplish the task
   c. Prescribing how the task must be accomplished
4. Mobilizing for Action
   a. Organizing and uniting the discontented
   b. Gaining sympathy and support from opinion leaders or legitimizers
   c. Pressuring the opposition
5. Sustaining the Social Movement
   a. Justifying setbacks and delays
   b. Maintaining viability of the movement
   c. Maintaining visibility of the movement[14]

Several caveats are in order before details of the model are presented. First, social movements are conceived of as organized, uninstitutionalized, and expansive collectivities that mobilize for action to bring about or to resist programs for change primarily through rhetoric and that are countered by

[12] In *Explorations in Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Gerald Mohrmann, Charles Stewart, and Donovan Ochs (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1973), pp. 96-113.

[13] Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," 186; Griffin, "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," 456-478. The notion of a natural progression of strategies from normal discursive means to extreme forms of confrontation is developed in John W. Bowers and Donovan J. Ochs, *The Rhetoric of Agitation and Control* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1971), pp. 16-38.

[14] This scheme of functions is being developed in conjunction with Craig Allen Smith of Memphis State University. For other discussions of essential functions, see Ralph H. Turner and Lewis Killian, *Collective Behavior*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), 245-425; John Wilson, *Introduction to Social Movements* (New York: Basic Books, 1973); Hans Toch, *The Social Psychology of Social Movements* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965); Gary B. Rush and R. Serge Denisoff, *Social and Political Movements* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971).

established orders.[15] The term *rhetoric* is used in this essay to denote the process by which a social movement seeks through the manipulation of verbal and nonverbal symbols to affect the perceptions of target audiences and thus to bring about changes in their ways of thinking, feeling, and/or acting. By my view, rhetoric is the primary *agency* available to social movements for satisfying a variety of functions. Moreover, it is pervasive even when a movement attempts to bargain or to coerce.[16]

Second, while I believe that the functions listed above are essential to the existence and success of social movements, I do not claim that these functions are unique. Social movements differ from institutionalized collectivities, not so much in terms of the functions their rhetoric must perform, as in terms of the constraints placed upon the fulfillment of these functions. As others have noted, the uninstitutionalized nature of social movements greatly limits their power to reward or punish and hence their strategic options.[17]

Third, while all social movements are required to perform the preceding functions, depending on the fundamental nature of their programs for change, some functions will assume greater prominence than others. *Innovative* social movements seek limited replacement (reform) or total replacement (revolutionary) of existing norms, values, and power distributions with new ones. *Revivalistic* social movements seek limited replacement or total replacement of existing norms, values, and power distributions with ones from a venerable, idealized past. *Resistance* social movements seek to block changes in norms, values, and power distributions.

Finally, the functional scheme presented in this essay is not developed chronologically or in conjunction with a series of progressive stages. Social movements are expansive collectivities that may contain many campaigns and a variety of organizations. Each campaign (e.g., the Montgomery bus boycott, the march on Selma, the 1963 demonstration at the Lincoln Memorial) and each social movement organization (e.g., the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Black Panthers) may progress through a lifecycle such as inception, rhetorical crisis, and consummation, but the lifecycles of campaigns and organizations may not coincide with one another or with the movement as a whole. Social movements are unlikely to perform any function once and then proceed to another task. Some functions may dominate the rhetoric of a movement at a given time, yet most demand attention on a continual basis.

[15] This definition is based on ones in Cameron, *Modern Social Movements*, 7; Wilson, *Introduction to Social Movements*, 8; Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies," 3; Charles A. Wilkinson, "A Rhetorical Definition of Movements," *Central States Speech Journal*, 27 (1976), 91.

[16] See Herbert W. Simons, *Persuasion: Understanding, Practice, and Analysis* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976), pp. 43-44, 250-86; Herbert W. Simons, "Persuasion in Social Conflicts: A Critique of Prevailing Conceptions and a Framework for Future Research," *Speech Monographs*, 39 (1972), 227-47; Parke G. Burgess, "Crisis Rhetoric: Coercion vs. Force," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 69; James R. Andrews, "The Rhetoric of Coercion and Persuasion: The Reform Bill of 1832," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 195.

[17] See Michael Lipsky, "Protest as a Political Resource," *The American Political Science Review*, 52 (1968, 1144-1148, 1157-1158; James Q. Wilson, "The Strategy of Protest: Problems of Negro Civic Action," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 3 (1961), 291-303; Robert Dahl, "The Analysis of Influence in Local Communities," in *Social Science and Community Action*, ed. Charles R. Adrian (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1960); Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies," 1-11.

A Functional Scheme for Analyzing the Rhetoric of Social Movements

1. *Transforming Perceptions of History*

Target audiences, especially when a social movement is in its infancy, may be unaware of a problem, may refuse to believe that a problem exists, may believe that the problem does not require drastic action, and may be optimistic about the future. A variety of established orders (schools, governments, courts, labor unions, social and professional groups, religious organizations, and the mass media) foster and reinforce these perceptions. Social movements must alter the ways audiences perceive the past, the present, and the future to convince them that an intolerable situation exists and that it warrants urgent action.[18]

These specific functions are often interrelated in a social movement's rhetoric. A revivalistic movement may view the past as a paradise lost, one worth resurrecting at any cost. The future, a return to an idealized past, may be portrayed as a perfect point in time or a perfect place.[19] A resistance movement may contend that society has progressed to a high state and see efforts by social movements and the established order as threatening to return society to a primitive past or to transport it into a future devoid of all that is sacred.[20] An innovative movement may portray the present as a result of or a continuation of an intolerable past and argue that the future will be bright only if the movement is successful.[21]

Social movements may find it necessary to revise their versions of history as they age, meet with successes and failures, and adapt to changing situations.[22]

2. *Transforming Perceptions of Society*

Social movements must attempt to alter target audiences' perceptions of the opposition, that opposition being all individuals and groups that movements feel are opposing societal changes necessary to alleviate intorerable conditions or to prevent intolerable conditions from developing. The rhetorical task is to strip such opponents of their legitimacy. Some rhetorical efforts portray the opposition as powerful, demonical, conspiratorial forces while others ridicule the opposition as pathetic, disorganized, impotent obstructions. Although conspiracy and devil appeals are prominent in the rhetoric of many movements, we do not know if these appeals are more common and vitriolic in particular types of social movements or how they change as movements encounter varying situations.

Social movements must attempt to

[18] See Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 58 (1972), 396-407; Richard B. Gregg, "A Phenomenologically Oriented Approach to Rhetorical Criticism," *Central States Speech Journal*, 17 (1966), 83-90; Bruce Fireman and William A. Gamson, "Utilitarian Logic in the Resource Mobilization Perspective," in *The Dynamics of Social Movements*, ed. Mayer N. Zald and John D. McCarthy (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop, 1979), pp. 27-31.

[19] See E. J. Hobsbawn, *Primitive Rebels*, 2nd ed. (New York: Praeger, 1963); Melvin J. Lasky, *Utopia and Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976); Wilson, *Introduction to Social Movements;* Carl Wayne Hensley, "Rhetorical Vision and the Persuasion of a Historical Movement: The Disciples of Christ in Nineteenth Century American Culture," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 250-64.

[20] See Martha Solomon, "The Rhetoric of STOP ERA: Fatalistic Reaffirmation," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 44 (1978), 42-59; Philip C. Wander, "The John Birch and the Martin Luther King Symbols in The Radical Right," *Western Speech*, 35 (1971), 4-14.

[21] See Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Radical Black Nationalism: A Case Study of Self-Conscious Criticism," *Central States Speech Journal*, 22 (1971), 151-160; Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation: An Oxymoron," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 74-86.

[22] See Parke G. Burgess, "The Rhetoric of Black Power: A Moral Demand?" *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 54 (1968), 122-133; and Robert L. Heath, "Dialectical Confrontation: A Strategy of Black Radicalism," *Central States Speech Journal*, 24 (1973), 168-177.

alter the self-perceptions of target audiences so that supporters and potential supporters come to believe in their self-worth and ability to bring about urgent change. Efforts such as replacing old labels attached to groups by their oppressors are designed to instill feelings of pride and power, to help audiences discover themselves as substantial human beings, and to encourage them to question social relationships and coalitions. Social movements often hope that self-discovery may result in a new "personal identity" and in the realization of "a people."[23] Self-discovery is an important means of creating "we-they" distinctions and a basis of group identification through a sense of shared fate.[24] "We," the "people," may come to represent all that is good while "they," the "oppressors," represent all that is evil.

3. Prescribing Courses of Action

Social movements must explain *what* should be done.[25] This function comprises the social movement's list of demands and solutions that will alleviate a condition, prevent undesired changes, or bring on the millennium or utopia.[26] Each movement must explain, defend, and sell its program for change. Problems develop when a number of organizations within a social movement prescribe different demands and solutions. Changing social situations, efforts by established orders to negate or to co-opt a movement's demands and solutions, and the necessity to address a variety of target audiences also may require alterations in explanations and content of demands and solutions. As John Wilson has noted, "When new sensitivities are created by social events and collectives, ideologies, to be accepted, must cater to these new sensitivities."[27] Efforts to adapt to new sensitivities, however, always expose social movement leaders and groups to charges of revisionism by movement purists.

Social movements must prescribe *who* ought to do the job. For one thing, in order to establish legitimacy, each social movement must convince audiences that only an uninstitutionalized collectivity is willing and able to bring about or to resist change. For another, social movement rhetoric may espouse specific types of organization and leadership or specific organizations and leaders best suited to solving urgent problems. Some social movements establish membership limitations to create elites capable of dealing with "unsolvable" conditions and the omnipotent forces that have produced them. "We-they" distinctions may be as prevalent within a social movement as they are between the social movement and its opposition. One movement faction may declare open warfare against another faction it deems ideologically deviant or inferior in membership. Samuel Gompers did not conceal his pleasure over the demise of the Knights of Labor, a union of unskilled workers that he considered to be an unnatural form of labor organization.[28]

Social movements must propose and defend *how* the job is to be done, that is, which strategies, tactics, and communication channels are most appro-

[23] McGee, pp. 235-49; Campbell, pp. 74-86; Brockriede and Scott, pp. 3-13.

[24] Aaron Gresson, III, "Phenomenology and the Rhetoric of Identification—A Neglected Dimension of Coalition Communication Inquiry," *Communication Quarterly*, 26 (1978), 14-23.

[25] For an excellent discussion of social movement efforts to prescribe courses of action, see Wilson, pp. 89-134.

[26] See Barbara A. Larson, "Samuel Davies and the Rhetoric of the New Light," *Speech Monographs*, 38 (1971), 207-16; Richard J. Ilkka, "Rhetorical Dramatization in the Development of American Communism," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 63 (1977), 414-20.

[27] Wilson, pp. 91-97.

[28] Samuel Gompers, "Address to the Machinists Convention," *American Federationist*, 8 (1901), 251.

priate and potentially most effective.[29] A revolutionary resistance movement may have a wide range of tactical choices but a narrow range of channels. A reform movement may have access to many channels but be limited to moderate, socially acceptable tactics. No movement can rely on the same means of change for long. Followers of the media become bored with them, and established orders learn how to deal with strategies and tactics rather quickly. A social movement may splinter into factions over differing views on how the job must be done, and some movement members may be more committed to means than to ends. Tactics such as strikes and boycotts often affect "innocent people" and may provoke "backlashes" that are fostered by established orders. Thus, movements must defend their actions and changes in actions to both members and non-members.

4. *Mobilizing for Action*

It is not enough for a social movement to present its views on history, society, and courses of action. It must also mobilize target audiences into performing appropriate actions.[30] It must unite and organize discontented factions and arouse them to perform a variety of actions. Some actions are self-change oriented: believers need to purify themselves before they can change others. Some are aimed at gaining control of agencies of influence: voting officials in or out of office, purchasing or creating communication media, or gaining control of corporations through stock proxies.[31] Other actions seek to gain the attention, sympathy, and support of opinion leaders, or to apply pressure on opponents, to gain recognition, concessions, or capitulation from antagonists. But whatever their aim, social movements need years of untiring efforts by large numbers of people to gain or prevent change. They must convince followers that victory is near, or at least inevitable, if all is done correctly, if followers remain steadfast in their commitment, and if unity is maintained. Movements must create and maintain what Eric Hoffer refers to as an "extravagant hope" within the membership.[32]

5. *Sustaining the Movement*

Since social movements usually last for years and experience changing social circumstances, they must perform functions that sustain them. They may have to explain and justify apparent setbacks, why they appear to be making few meaningful gains, why agreements with established orders have not been implemented or have been ineffective, and why they have not reached a goal by a target date. The variety of audiences social movements address may perceive progress, victories, agreements, and priority of goals differently. Internal and external opponents capitalize on delays and setbacks to proclaim superiority over a movement or its organization.

Social movements must wage a continual battle to remain viable. More rhetorical energy may be expended on fund raising, membership drives, acquisition of materials and property, and maintenance of movement communication media than on selling ideologies to target audiences and pressuring the opposition. Reinforcing commitment of members and satisfying membership

[29] See Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetorical Structure of the 'New Left' Movement: Part I," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 50 (1964), 114-27; Malcolm O. Sillars, "The Rhetoric of Petition in Boots," *Speech Monographs*, 39 (1972), 92-104.

[30] See Ralph R. Smith and Russell R. Windes, "The Rhetoric of Mobilization: Implications for the Study of Movements," *Southern Speech Communication Journal*, 42 (1976), 1-19.

[31] Saul D. Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Pragmatic Primer for Realistic Radicals* (New York: Vintage, 1972), 165-83.

[32] Eric Hoffer, *The True Believer* (New York: Harper and Row, 1951), p. 18.

gratifications limit a movement's ability to perform other functions. Ironically, a movement may become too successful. Growth in membership and geographical sphere of influence and creeping institutionalization may seriously reduce the informality of structure and the feeling of urgency that attracted people to the movement.[33] Thus, a serious decline in membership and commitment may occur when success seems near.

Social movements must remain visible. "Out of sight, out of mind" is an appropriate adage. Social movements, the media, and target audiences have insatiable appetites for rhetorical happenings, but few social movements have adequate leadership, membership, energy, and funds to satisfy these appetites over long periods while fending off counter efforts by opponents. Old events that drag on receive little attention and produce serious drains on a movement's resources. Social movements often resort to rhetorical events such as ceremonies, annual meetings, and anniversary celebrations to remain visible to both members and nonmembers.

[33] Mayer N. Zald and Roberta Ash, "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change," *Social Forces*, 44 (1966), 327-41.

Conclusions

A functional approach appears to be the best vehicle by which scholars may approach Leland Griffin's vision of discovering "rhetorical patterns" or a "consistent set of forms" in the rhetoric of social movements. The journey will be neither simple nor quick, and, undoubtedly, the functional scheme presented will undergo refinement as our knowledge and experience grow.

As functional studies accumulate, we should be able to piece together the rhetorical puzzle of social movements and to formulate answers to several questions. How are essential functions performed by: (1) Different types of social movements—innovative, revivalistic, resistance? (2) Social movements demanding differing degrees of change? (3) Social movements that encounter changing situations? (4) Social movements that confront different types and degrees of opposition? (5) Social movements as they experience successes and failures or growth and decline? (6) Differing factions within social movements? (7) Social movements that face conflicting demands? (8) Social movements as they age and approach termination because of failure or institutionalization?

ON TERMS, DEFINITIONS AND THEORETICAL DISTINCTIVENESS COMMENTS ON PAPERS BY MCGEE AND ZAREFSKY

Herbert W. Simons

THE problem before me is determining whether McGee and Zarefsky offer compelling arguments.[1] I want to say "yes," but I cannot. Indeed, I fear that "movement" scholarship would be significantly impeded were their views widely accepted. McGee begins by questioning whether the rhetoric of social movements constitutes a distinctive theoretical domain. It soon becomes apparent, however, that he not only has reservations about the distinctiveness of movement rhetoric but also about the very term "social movement," about its conventionally employed definition, and about theorists who, in treating social movements as "phenomena," propagate all manner of errors and illusions. Zarefsky challenges two core principles of the situationalist approach with which I am identified.[2] He is unconvinced that movements and nonmovements confront different types of situational pressures, and he doubts whether they are impelled and constrained, thereby, to exhibit different patterns of rhetoric. On this basis, he concludes that "theoretical studies have not been very productive" and that theorists have applied the term "social movement" too restrictively.

I intend in this paper to comment directly on McGee and Zarefsky's essays, with particular reference to their criticisms of my own writings. Before addressing their main arguments, however, I should like to offer a brief defense of situationalism and its application to the rhetoric of social movements by theoretically oriented rhetoricians and sociologists.

In Defense of Situationalism

The notion that situational factors impel and constrain rhetorical choices antedates contemporary situationalists such as Black, Bitzer and me by well over 2000 years.[3] Appear before a law tribunal, said Aristotle, and you had

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[1] See Michael C. McGee, "'Social Movement': Phenomenon or Meaning?" and David Zarefsky, "A Skeptical View of Movement Studies" (both in this issue of *CSSJ*).

[2] Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 1-11. Also see Herbert W. Simons, Elizabeth Mechling, and Howard N. Schreier, "Functions of Communication in Mobilizing for Collective Action from the Bottom Up: The Rhetoric of Social Movements," in *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory*, ed. Carroll C. Arnold and John W. Bowers (Boston: Allyn & Bacon), in press. Subsequent references in this article to this chapter list the authors only.

[3] See Lane Cooper, *The Rhetoric of Aristotle* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1932), pp. 1-4, 226-41. Also see Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (New York: MacMillan, 1965) and Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 1, 1968, 1-14.

better speak differently than on a ceremonial occasion or before a deliberative assembly. Be the accused rather than the accuser, and you had better use this line of argument rather than that. There will always be exceptions to the "rules" and overlap among "rhetorics," but the principle that discourse must be adapted to particular types of situations remains eminently sound.

To assess the "productivity" of theoretically oriented scholarship on the rhetoric of social movements, one must examine the work of situationalists outside the field of communication. Though one would never know it from Zarefsky's essay,[4] sociologists have had a good deal to say about such rhetorical functions as recruiting activists, sustaining their commitments, promoting ideologies and programmatic goals, and resisting counterinfluence. Griffin's pioneering essay on "historical movements" as well as his dramatistic theory were significantly influenced by the work of such situationalists as Brinton and Hopper.[5] In recent years, "resource management" theorists within sociology have advanced our understanding of the rhetorical requirements and problems confronting particular types of social movements. They have done so, not just through armchair theorizing, but on the basis of field studies and comparative historical research.[6]

In holding to the premise that situational factors impel and constrain rhetorical choices, sociologists, including "empirical" sociologists, have by no means ignored the influence of rhetoric on collective perceptions of situation.[7] Prior to McGee's "In Search of 'The People,'" many sociologists were arguing that perceptions of situation are socially constructed by rhetorical processes of labeling, issue articulation, opposition, and affirmation. Turner and Killian, for example, developed an "emergent norm" theory to explain how it is that injustices seem so self-evident after social movements have helped to define them but are so difficult to identify beforehand.[8] Blumer has underscored the importance agitation has in calling attention to social problems.[9] Skolnick and others have asserted that processes of social construction are also at work in the development of culturally legitimated meanings of politically sensitive terms.[10]

[4] Zarefsky compounds the error of dichotomizing sharply between "historical" and "theoretical" studies by including in the latter category only the writings of scholars in speech communication.

[5] See Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1952); Rex Hopper, "The Revolutionary Process: A Frame of Reference for the Study of Revolutionary Movements, *Social Forces*, 28 (1950), 270-79. These works informed Griffin's conceptions of stages of historical movement and of the role of different types of leaders at each stage. See Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 38 (1952), 184-88, and "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," in *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke*, W. H. Rueckert, ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969).

[6] See, for example, William Gamson, *The Strategy of Social Protest* (Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey, 1975); Anthony Oberschall, *Social Conflict and Social Movements* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1973); Rosabeth Kanter, "Commitment and Social Organization: A Study of Commitment Mechanisms in Utopian Communities, *American Sociological Review*, 33 (1968), 499-517. Also see the section on mobilization in Simons, Mechling and Schreier.

[7] Michael C. McGee, "In Search of 'The People': A Rhetorical Alternative," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61 (1975), 235-49. McGee portrays theorists working "under the influence of American empirical sociology" as having so objectified social movements that they ignore the role of human consciousness in bringing movements into being as well as the role of rhetoric in shaping that consciousness. But for vague allusions to the work of Neil Smelser, his claim is not substantiated.

[8] Ralph Turner and Lewis Killian, *Collective Behavior* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

[9] Herbert Blumer, "Social Problems as Collective Behavior," *Social Problems*, 18 (1971), 298-305.

[10] Jerome Skolnick, *The Politics of Protest* (New York: Ballantine, 1969); for a review of

The theoretical enterprise has been greatly abetted by near agreement among sociologists and others on the term "social movement" and its conceptual geography. As Zarefsky has observed, the definitional features commonly ascribed to the term by sociologists enjoy wide currency among movement scholars.[11] They are, of course, free to choose other terms or to highlight other features of the social environment. It should be emphasized, however, that agreement on key terms is ordinarily of great value to scholarly communities. Accepted terms and definitions are akin to ground rules in organized baseball or other forms of athletics.[12] It follows that those who would change "the rules" should accept the burden of showing that the old rules are in some sense unreliable or invalid and of proposing and justifying a new set of rules. Because there is no institutional equivalent in most scholarly arenas to a baseball association empowered to legislate key terms and definitions, the burden on those who would challenge conventionally accepted terms and definitions is especially great.

Of course, some uses of the term "social movement" may pose problems. There are borderline cases which resist easy classification. Classification is sometimes rendered difficult by the fact that the attributes used to define the term are not physical properties but sociocultural factors which require judgments or interpretations by knowledgeable observers. Because the phenomena referred to by the term arouse strong passions, it is sometimes used eulogistically or pejoratively without clear warrant. Sometimes it is used metaphorically without contextual indications that its conventional meaning has been stretched. And, too, it is sometimes confused with "movement" as progess or destiny.[13]

Yet none of these occasional difficulties provides a sound basis for avoiding the term "social movement" or its conventionally accepted definition. Were we to eliminate from our scholarly lexicon all terms which exhibit these sorts of problems, we might be rendered all but mute. Surely we would be compelled to abandon such terms as "rhetoric" and "communication," conventional uses of which also reflect and trigger emotions, also refer to nonphysical attributes, also are arguable categories as regards borderline cases, also occasion confusion, etc.[14]

These problems notwithstanding, scholars have had no difficulty recognizing additional examples of collectivities which fit the criteria of the conventional definition beyond those which led them initially to that conception; the definition of "social movement" is no longer an *"a priori,"* if it ever was. Moreover, the decision to conceive social movements in the manner suggested by the conventional view has been reinforced as knowledge and theory about the phenomena delimited by the term have accumulated. The definition is of paticular value to scholars in our own field in that it identifies common situational factors with which leaders of social movements must contend rhetorically. Of theoretical significance is the distinction between social move-

other such arguments see the section on social control in Simons, Mechling and Schreier.

[11] Cf. Zarefsky, n. 15.

[12] It is true, of course, that baseball rules, like definitions of "social movement" are, in McGee and Zarefsky's terms, "persuasive definitions." Widen the strike zone, and you may create the impression that hitting has improved; narrow it, and you may create the opposite impression.

[13] For a discussion of these and other problems, see the introductory section of Simons, Mechling and Schreier.

[14] See Herbert W. Simons, *Persuasion: Understanding, Practice and Analysis* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1976), Ch. 2.

ments and established institutions, in that it calls attention to the disadvantaged position, relative to those they oppose, of collectivities whose ideas, methods of action and core organizations have not yet been legitimated by the larger society. Most theories of rhetoric and communication are of the top-down variety or, at best, assume the existence of symmetrical power/status relationships. Thus, we have "top-down" theories of marketing, advertising, public relations, teaching, child-rearing, industrial management, diffusion of innovations, as well as symmetry-assuming theories of legal conflict, labor-management relations, interpersonal communication, and small group interaction. But, as Rogers has observed, we have far fewer theories about how influence is, has been, or can be exerted from the "bottom up."[15]

These things said, one wonders why it is that McGee and Zarefsky are so exercised over conventional uses of the term "social movement" and over the situationalist approach to the study of movement rhetoric. It is time for a more careful examination of their papers.

Commentary on McGee's Essay

As I understand the European tradition of hermeneutic criticism, it involves deontologizing subject-object distinctions and other such common sense assumptions so that we may better understand our "being-in-the-world."[16] Thus, Hawes speaks of rendering "the familiar unfamiliar, the mundane bizarre, the routine foreign, the taken-for-granted problematic"[17] as a means toward making something that is—quoting Palmer—" 'unfamiliar, distant and obscure in meaning into something real, near and intelligible.' "[18]

I do not regard myself as a hermeneuticist, but I appreciate the deconstructive and redescriptive efforts of the critics McGee cites, and I would welcome a careful hermeneutic critique of both scholarly and lay discourses on social movements. I am not persuaded by McGee's critique, however, for three reasons. First, it is erected on an unsupportable foundation that is at variance with the very philosophical tradition with which he claims to align himself. Second, McGee offers questionable charges, innuendos, and fallacious arguments. Third, he does little to sustain his claim that the rhetoric of social movements does not constitute a distinctive theoretical domain.

As grounds for his critique of the situationalist approach to social movements, McGee resurrects the subject-object dualism which hermeneuticists since Heidegger have been at pains to eviscerate. Moreover, in constituting "phenomena"—the *object* part of his subject-object dichotomy—McGee reinstates a version of orthodox empiricism which even the logical positivists might well find too scientistic. Phenomena, according to McGee, are "directly in human experience" rather than "inferred." They are " 'out there' in the environment." They are "eminently present to each of us regardless of our political views or personal experience." They are "objective" and "empirical."

[15] Everett M. Rogers, "Social Structure and Social Change," in *Processes and Phenomena of Social Change*, G. Zaltman, ed. (New York: Wiley, 1973).

[16] As Michael J. Hyde and Craig R. Smith have observed, "The fallacy of the subject-object split . . . is never adopted in works characterizing the phenomenological-hermeneutic movement: (p. 353). See "Hermeneutics and Rhetoric: A Seen but Unobserved Relationship," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (1979), 347-63.

[17] Leonard C. Hawes, "Toward a Hermeneutical Phenomenology of Communication," *Communication Quarterly*, 25 (1977), 33.

[18] Richard C. Palmer, *Hermeneutics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969), p. 14. Quoted in Hawes, p. 33.

They stay the same despite McGee's choice of one term or another to characterize it. All else, including "descriptions, explanations and predictions of phenomena" are "meanings," "a set of meanings," or "interpretations."[19]

Even more surprising are McGee's examples of "phenomena" and "meanings." Given his criteria, one would assume that McGee would limit his examples of phenomena to such "natural" categories as cats, bats and rats—with the added proviso that they must be glimpsed directly and not inferred from an image on a television screen or a description in a book. McGee, however, lists as phenomena the President, Standard Oil Corporation, reward systems, interactions in the nuclear family, angry picketers, and changes of patterns in discourse. Presumably, no inferences are required to "experience" the President or Standard Oil; reward systems, family interactions, and even changes in patterns of interaction are "out-there" for all to see objectively; and picketers, let alone "angry" picketers, are eminently present to us regardless of our political views or experience. Social movements, by contrast, are not phenomena. Along with "containment" and "imperialism" they are meanings or interpretations.

Since I do not wish to quarrel over definitions any more than McGee, I would ordinarily be willing to conclude by agreeing that, given his criteria, social movements are not "phenomena." As I previously indicated, I do not separate categories from their users, phenomena from meanings, or objects from their descriptions, and I allow for judgments or interpretations as requisite for labeling [illegible] collective as a social movement [illegible] phenomenon." McGee is, of course, privileged to do otherwise. But when he relegates social movements to mere "interpretations" while insisting that "angry picketers" or even "Standard Oil" are objective, empirical, "out-there" phenomena that remain unchanged regardless of our political views, I am prompted to remind him of another essay of his in which he argued that social constructions such as these are brought into being and shaped by discourse.[20]

Moreover, by McGee's way of thinking, "social movement" is no ordinary set of meanings. It is an analogue, a metaphor, a "trick-of-the-mind" which "causes us to maintain the illusion of 'morality', 'purpose' and 'destiny' in collective behavior." It is also "an interpretation of phenomenal data controlled less by what happens in the real world than by what a particular user of the analogue wants to see in the real world."

Indeed, as McGee warms to his critical task, those, like me, who treat social movements as phenomena, are charged with foisting all manner of errors and illusions. Thus, Simons and/or his ilk commit the pathetic fallacy, come "dangerously close" to the organic metaphor, create "the equivalent" of faculty psychology, promote a "widely-recognized ambiguity," issue a "fiat by definition," offer a *non sequitur* to justify claims to near consensus on a definition, politicize their theories or impute motives to human actors, commit a *tu quoque*, offer an unwarranted *reductio*, affirm a consequent, and beg other important questions. Many of these errors, moreover, either are committed in company with various suspect figures or else help to legitimate them. Directly or by innuendo, McGee charges Simons and those of similar persuasion with

[19] Unless otherwise specified, these and subsequent references are to the articles by McGee and Zarefsky appearing in this issue of *CSSJ*.

[20] McGee, "In Search of 'The People.'"

making the same mistake as Karl Marx, with "drinking the bitter residues of positivism," and with granting "factual legitimacy" to the ploys of fascists, Nazis, communists, and even criminals.

As one reviews McGee's list of charges, it seems a bit excessive. That impression sharpens when it is recognized that, by McGee's own admission, many of the so-called errors cited above attach to the very eighteenth- and nineteenth-century doctrines about *historical* movement which current *social* movement theorists have sought to repudiate. How, then, does McGee justify his criticism? The answer is that he does so in a roundabout and logically suspect manner.

Noting that some mathematical modeling has shown us the errors of empirical researchers, McGee states:

> The intellectual history of the problem "movement" performs the same function as mathematical modeling: That is, by reconstructing the debate which seems to end in the proposition "Movement is a phenomenon," we can understand (a) the intentional origins of the variant conceptions of "movement," and therefore (b) the theoretical consequences of choosing to believe that "Movement is a phenomenon." When I survey the history of the concept "movement," therefore, I mean not to suggest that there is an aura of "legitimacy" in earlier characterizations of "movement," but rather that the history of the concept reveals the pragmaic and ideal pitfalls awaiting those who would make what I judge to be ill-advised conceptual choices

The "pitfalls," however, await only those who continue to use "movement" in its original sense, who take the same side as the repudiated historians of whom McGee speaks, and who do not redefine the phenomenon or even shift to a different construct.

Consider, by analogy, that for most of its two thousand year history, the term "atom" meant something indivisible and irreducible. Then modern physicists discovered that the atom had a nucleus. The nucleus was split, and out came neutrons, positrons, and other particles. By McGee's reasoning, have not physicists made "ill-advised conceptual choices" in continuing to speak of atoms as phenomena, and perhaps even the *same* conceptual error as those who viewed atoms as indivisible and irreducible?

I have neither the space nor the inclination to deal point by point with all of the other criticisms raised by McGee. Some were anticipated in the introduction to this essay. Others are dealt with by Lucas in his essay.[21] I would like however, to take issue with one argument that received considerable emphasis in McGee's analysis—the claim that "social movement" is ambiguous because many other terms could be used to characterize the phenomena to which it refers.

I have before me a "something" with the title "Social Movement: Phenomenon or Meaning? Now I have labeled that "something" a "paper," and I believe that the label is essentially unambiguous. However, I could, to quote McGee, "conceptualize my experience with the agency of one or another of the following signifiers, each with its own nuance": (a) "article," (b) "missile," (c) "epistle," (d) "sermon," (e) "diatribe," (f) "second negative rebuttal," (g) "outburst," (h) "protest," (i) "attack," (j) "peristaltic prose," (k) "symbolic artifact," (l) "campaign document," (m) "instrumental behavior," (n) "arrangement of spaces between words," (o) "autobiographical statement," (p) "phenomenon." Neither my list of alternatives to "paper" nor McGee's list of alternatives to "social movement" demonstrates that either term is used ambiguously. I believe, incidentally, that each of the labels on my list is a more appropriate descriptor

[21] See Lucas' essay in this issue of *CSSJ*.

of McGee's "something" than "social movement" is as a term denoting "angry picketers." Not all angry picketers are associated with social movements, and neither their anger nor their picketing are sufficient to warrant that label.

Finally, McGee says little about the issue of theoretical distinctiveness, which allegedly is the major question addressed in his essay. He raises some provocative questions about "movement" as a term in ordinary language, and about how ordinary citizens perceive social movements, but he says nothing to challenge the situationalist premise that, as the term "social movement" is defined by most sociologists, the rhetoric of social movements constitutes a distinctive theoretical domain. For a sustained argument on that question, we must turn to Zarefsky.

Commentary on Zarefsky's Essay

With respect to the two major issues raised in Zarefsky's essay the distinctiveness of the situations confronting social movements and the uniqueness of their rhetoric—readers should know that he and I have argued them before. In an earlier paper, Zarefsky maintained that "(1) the War on Poverty . . . had a rhetorical career identical to that of a social movement, (2) little rhetorical significance attaches to the fact the War on Poverty was not an insurgent effort."[22] I countered by pointing to important differences between the rhetorical situations confronting government agencies such as OEO and those faced by social movements, *most of them differences which had been revealed, but later ignored, in Zarefsky's essay*:

> First, governments and governmental agencies (and other institutionalized collectivities) generally have immense advantages in resources. As Zarefsky noted, the OEO had legitimacy bestowed upon it by Congress and the President; it was well funded; it had access to other power centers; it could hire and fire.
>
> Second, bottom-up insurgency groups have relatively few material incentives by which to recruit and organize constituents; they must mobilize on the basis of ideological appeals. Zarefsky herself noted that whereas, among government leaders, "it is difficult to identify a single enactment of the negative in the inception of this struggle for a new order" (p. 354), insurgent groups made the government the "enemy" by arguing "that government had conspired to represent the interests of politicians who stood to gain from the largesse the poverty program would distribute" (p. 358).
>
> Third, while it is true that social movements and controversial government agencies must both react to resistance generated by the larger structure, the nature of that resistance in the two cases is quite different. Insurgent groups are often the victims of harsh repressive measures such as jailings of leaders and beatings by the police. Governmental agencies are rarely subject to that type of social control, but they are generally more constrained by bureaucratic friction and red tape, and by the possibility—an eventuality in OEO's case—that the branches of government which had bestowed legitimacy upon the agency might withdraw that legitimacy.
>
> Finally, as Zarefsky noted (p. 361), "Protest depends upon publicity, since it increases a group's numerical resources through the staging of public events. Publicity, in turn, requires the continuous development of new and dramatic techniques."[23]

In this volume, Zarefsky provides little in the way of additional support for his contentions that neither the rhetorical situations nor the rhetoric of social movements are unique. Additional examples are presented, but Zarefsky continues to ignore or minimize differences between social movements and establishment campaigns while treating similarities as identities. Indeed, the very differences to which Zarefsky bore

[22] David Zarefsky, "President Johnson's War on Poverty: The Rhetoric of Three 'Establishment' Movements," *Communication Monographs*, 44 (1977), 352-73.

[23] Simons, Mechling and Schreier, pp. 148-49 of original ms. Page references in quote are from Zarefsky's "War on Poverty" paper.

reluctant witness in his "War on Poverty" essay are now construed as having initially been identified by Simons, Mechling and Schreier.[24] And, where Zarefsky does own up to differences in patterns of rhetoric, he relegates them to the status of "tactics" rather than "strategies," as though that somehow saves them from being important differences. Moreover, Zarefsky errs in characterizing confrontational forms such as civil disobedience as *merely* publicity-seeking tactics. As Scott and Smith and numerous other scholars have observed, such activities function also to foment solidarity, to signal a group's willingness to suffer imprisonment or other harsh punishment in behalf of a cause, and to force the enemy into counter productive retaliatory measures.[25] Actions such as these are patently a far cry from a President's holing up at Camp David or staging a riverboat cruise on the Delta Queen.

Having failed by his own examples to support his "no difference" hypotheses, Zarefsky appears to have thoroughly undermined his case. But he retreats to two fallback positions: (1) the tactical *repertoires* of movements and nonmovements may be the same, and (2) the factors which separate social movements from established agencies are not really features of the rhetorical situation but sociological classifications.

Both arguments are difficult to accept. Admittedly, movement activists employ a wide array of tactics, some of them quite similar to those employed by institutional leaders. I do not argue that social movements are required to employ confrontational tactics, either by definition or by dint of the situations they encounter.[26] I argue only that confrontational tactics are much more plausible options for movements than for nonmovements.[27] Institutional authorities do not typically encourage tax refusals, tea dumpings, burnings in effigy, assaults on legislative representatives, subversions of royal processions, or any of a number of other such tactics which Tilly found commonplace in his archival survey of "contentious events" staged by movement activists in colonial America and early nineteenth century England.[28] Nor do they routinely resort to rent strikes, vigils, hartals, renouncing honors, sit-ins, or other such nonviolent direct action techniques which Oppenheimer and Lakey have identified.[29]

As for Zarefsky's second argument, it appears to build on a false dichotomy. When he says, for example, that "The nature of the situation, rather than their institutionalized or noninstitutionalized

[24] Thus, for example, Zarefsky states: "In responding to this argument, Simons, Mechling and Schreier identify a number of differences between the War on Poverty and insurgent movements. . . ." As indicated above, the differences noted were mostly his, not ours.

[25] Robert L. Scott and Donald Smith, "The Rhetoric of Confrontation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (1969), 1-8. For a review of other essays on the functions of confrontation, see Simons, Mechling and Schreier's section on external influence.

[26] Note that Cathcart's case for a redefinition of "social movement," or for a shift to the term "rhetorical movement" hinges on a judgment of what "the public" requires before they will label a collective as a "movement." Whether "the public" requires confrontation as a necessary condition for "social movement" is an as yet unresolved empirical question which, in any case, need not influence definitions of the term by scholars. My impression is that, over the course of history, there have been many groups—both reformist and utopian—which did not confront in Cathcart's sense but which were nevertheless perceived by the general public as social movement organizations (e.g., the recent growth/awarness movement, the progressive education movement earlier in this century, the Weld-led faction of the Abolitionist movement).

[27] See "Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 1-11.

[28] Charles Tilly, *Repertoires of Contention in America and Britain, 1750-1830* (Working Paper #151, Center for Research on Social Organization, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1977).

[29] Martin Oppenheimer and George Lakey, *A Manual for Direct Action* (Chicago: Quadangle, 1964).

status, will determine their means of social control," one wonders what he means by "situation," if *not* such "sociological classifications." And, again, when Zarefsky maintains that legitimacy and access to media depend "more on the rhetorical situation than on one's membership in a sociological category," he excludes the very stuff of rhetorical situations. If, by "rhetorical situation," Zarefsky means all of the idiosyncratic elements in a given context, then, by definition, no theorizing is possible, since no two situations can ever be identical. In the face of idiosyncratic elements theorists must nevertheless ask: what elements do these situations have in common? And that question leads back again to such "sociological categories" as noninstitutionalized status.[30]

Having offered rejoinders to Zarefsky's main arguments, I should like at this point to offer qualified support for one of his conclusions. Zarefsky is right in suggesting that the insights we have developed about the rhetoric of social movements should be applied heuristically to other rhetorics by using the term "movement" metaphorically. Such a move was foreshadowed by Kuhn's treatment of paradigm shifts in science as akin to political revolutions;[31] by Weigert's discussion of social-scientific disciplines as "social movements of elites;"[32] and by my comparison between the rhetorical requirements, problems and strategies of social movements and professions.[33] There are important similarities between the rhetorics of movements and nonmovements. Nothing in my approach requires that they be entirely unique. Provided that theorists make clear that they are using the term "social movement" in a metaphorical sense, much can be gained by theoretical extensions.

In fact, as Mechling, Schreier and I observed, there appear to be rhetorical requirements and problems common to *all* collectivities, on the basis of which it is possible to develop general theories about the rhetoric of collectivities and about the rhetoric of individuals in collectivities:

> In all collectivities—churches, business corporations, movement organizations, nation states—there are inevitable tensions between the moral and the political, between members' role requirements and their personal values, between the need for ideological consistency and the need to adapt to new realities, between the need for organizational cohesiveness and the need of individual members to assert their individual and group interests against the interests of other individuals and groups within the organization and even against the interests of the organization as a whole. Moreover, collectivities, like individuals, have interests in common with external social systems, as well as conflicting interests. They may exploit divisions within the external system as well as form coalitions with segments of that system. These, we would assert, are invariant characteristics of life in and between collectivities, and they are reflective of the mixed-motive nature of all ongoing human relationships.[34]

Identifying such invariant characteristics provides a basis for extending insights gleaned from studying movement rhetoric to the rhetoric of collectivities as a whole. Let me emphasize

[30] Nor, contrary to Zarefsky, is theorizing advanced by shifting to such amorphous variables as the strength or weakness of a group's position. Immediately, one asks: what types of situations are correlated with strength and weakness? And that question leads us back again to "sociological classification."

[31] Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (International Encyclopedia of the Unified Science, II, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

[32] Andrew Weigert, "The Immoral Rhetoric of Scientific Sociology," *American Sociologist*, 5 (1970), 111-19.

[33] Herbert W. Simons, "Are Scientists Rhetors in Disguise? An Analysis of Discursive Processes Within Scientific Communities," in *Rhetoric in Transition: Studies in the Nature and Uses of Rhetoric*, E. E. White, ed. (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980), pp. 115-30.

[34] Simons, Mechling and Schreier, p. 146.

once again, however, that the rhetorical requirements of social movements are in basic ways distinctive. It would be a mistake for consumer activists such as Ralph Nader to mute their attacks on Congress in the manner required of governmental agencies beholden to Congress for appropriations. Comparisons between scientific and political revolutions are interesting, but we should not expect advocates of a new scientific paradigm literally to take up arms against colleagues wedded to a more traditional paradigm. It is one thing to effect a "grass-roots' Marxist revolution, as in Cuba and China; quite another to stage a *coup d'etat* and then attempt to restructure society along Marxist lines, as was attempted in Afghanistan.

A Final Comment

If there is one lesson which emerges for me from this symposium, it is that we would be well advised to substitute "both-and" thinking for much of our current "either-or" thinking. Rather than choosing between "phenomenon" and "meaning," let us recognize that all categorizations of "phenomena" are, as one philosopher put it "sets of differences which, for a particular purpose, don't seem to make a difference." Rather than choosing between the labels "social movement" and "historical movement," let us, in the spirit of Lucas' essay, designate our theoretical domain as "movement rhetoric" and then affix the labels "social" or "historical" depending on whether we are focusing upon noninstitutionalized collectivities or on long-term dramas involving conflicting groups and ideologies. Rather than choosing between broad and narrow conceptions of "social movement," let us encourage metaphorical extensions of the term (provided they are clearly labeled as such) while hewing at other times to the more restrictive, sociological conception. Let us do both "historical" and "theoretical" studies, and, following Smith's advice, let us do studies which are both grounded in history and theory-centered. Let us not ignore Andrews' reminder that the relationship between historian and theorist is complementary *and* adversarial: they, too, have conflicting rhetorical requirements. Above all, let us recognize, with Griffin, that there may be more than one route into "Symmes' Hole," including some which are as yet unexplored.

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